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INDIAN SOCIAL REFORM

IN FOUR PARTS

Being a Collection of Essays, Addresses, Speeches, &c., with an Appendix

EDITED BY

C. YAJNESVARA CHINTAMANI.

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கையொப்பம்

161/3-1901

TO

THE CHERISHED AND REVERED MEMORY

OF THE

LATE HON'BLE Mr. JUSTICE MAHADEO GOVIND RANADE,

M.A., LL.B., C.I.E.

Whose gigantic intellect, sainted character, many-sided activity, unflinching devotion to duty and passionate love of motherland were the wonder and inspiration of millions of his admiring countrymen; whose whole life was dedicated to the service of this beloved India of ours and was one noble record of glorious exertions and self-sacrificing labours for the regeneration of her teeming millions in all the departments of our activity in general and in the holy field of Social Reform in particular; and who laid me personally under a debt immense of endless gratitude by the parental solicitude he evinced in the present humble undertaking from the very beginning of its inception to the last day of his life:

THIS VOLUME

IS DEDICATED,

AS A FEEBLE TOKEN OF GRATITUDE,

BY THE EDITOR.

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PREFACE.

In placing the present work before the public, I do hardly think any apology is necessary. In the holy task of India's regeneration, Social Reform has a very important part to play as without social efficiency, no permanent progress in the other fields of our activity can be achieved. That Hindu Society is at present far from being in a state of efficiency owing to the serious mischief wrought by the many evil customs that powerfully clog the wheel of progress at every step, is a fact that requires only to be mentioned for it to be admitted. Following in the wake of English education and our assimilation of the strong points of Western civilisation, a general awakening has taken place in India; and ceaseless efforts have, for the last one or two generations, been put forth by the leaders of educated Indian thought to better the condition of our community politically, socially, intellectually and materially. The birth of that grand national movement, the Indian National Congress was followed by the foundation of its sister institution, the Indian National Social Conference; and like the Congress in the political field, the Social Conference has reduced all the weak points of our social organisation to a definite shape, has devised various methods for remedying them, and has showed us who our leaders are in this department of our progress. For the promotion of any great cause, a sort of literature should grow around it which would popularise it by dispelling all false notions and spreading correct ideas about it. Thus an immense mass of literature—and very useful literature—has grown up on the subject of Social Reform, and a calm and dispassionate study of it cannot, I venture to think, fail to convince any rational mind of the utility of effecting reform in our

social economy. It must also show that we who advocate a return to some of the more wholesome of our old ways, and not the opponents of our cause who blindly refuse to be guided by reason and expediency and persist in sticking to what custom alone sanctions, are the true conservatives, the true Hindus. It has been thought desirable to give to the public in one connected whole in the shape of a volume like the present one the best thoughts of our best men, of our intellectual aristocracy who naturally form the cream of our society on the overwhelmingly important subject of Social Reform; and how far I have succeeded in achieving this object, it is for the public to say.

My first thanks, in this connection, are due to my valued friend, Mr. K. Venkanna Pantulu, First Grade Pleader, Vizianagram, whose sincerity of purpose, ardent advocacy of the cause of Social Reform, and large-hearted liberality have alone made the publication of this volume possible; and I write only the sober truth when I say that but for him, this work could not have been undertaken at all. He has throughout been of immense help to me in completing it.

The late lamented Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade, C.I.E., whose sudden demise cast such a deep gloom over the whole land, rendered me every possible assistance in bringing out this volume, and from the very moment that Mr. Venkanna Pantulu and myself thought of undertaking this work, his mature counsel and kindly co-operation were entirely at our disposal. It is simply impossible to over-estimate the nature or the magnitude of the loss I, in common with all the rest of my countrymen, have sustained by his having been so prematurely called upon to pay the debt of nature. I mean no disrespect to the galaxy of the distinguished contributors I have been fortunate enough to secure when I say that this book has lost much of its value by going without the masterly Introduction from his

gifted pen, which he was kind enough to promise to me as soon as requested. It seemed to me all but impossible to fill the void created by his passing, and so the book goes without any Introduction at all. As a feeble mark of my deep gratitude to him for the noble services rendered by him to the sacred cause of Social Reform in general, and paticularly for the great help he gave me in the publication of this volume, I have dedicated it to his sainted memory.

My most grateful thanks are due to the many eminent contributors who wrote for the book at considerable sacrifice of time and labour simply as a labour of love, accepting for their reward only the promotion of a cause dear and near to all of us. I doubt not their views on the respective questions dealt with by them, formed after deep study, mature reflection and considerable experience, will be given the serious consideration they so richly merit by one and all of my thinking countrymen and will also succeed in inducing courageous action in at least some quarters. I must also express my obligations to the late Mr. Justice Ranade, Mr. Justice Chandavarkar, Dr. Mahendra Lal Sircar, Rao Bahadur K. Viresalingam Pantulu and Mr. B. Varadacharlu, the Secretary of the Madras Hindu Social Reform Association for supplying to me the papers printed as Parts II, III, IV and Appendix, and to my distinguished friend Mr. G. Subramania Iyer for the excellent advice he has uniformly given me in seeing the work through.

It now only remains for me to express my great regret that it has not been possible to publish the book earlier owing to several unexpected difficulties over which I had no control.

MADRAS, 15*th May* 1901. C. Y. CHINTAMANI.

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PART FIRST.

Original Papers.

I.—Social History of India.

BY RAMAKRISHNA GOPAL BHANDARKAR, M.A., PH.D., C.I.E.,
Late Professor of Oriental Languages.
Deccan College, Poona.

INTRODUCTORY.

Before entering on the subject of this paper it is necessary to give the reader a general idea of the comparative antiquity of the different portions of Sanskrit literature referred to therein. The hymns contained in the Rigveda Samhita are the oldest; but they were composed at different times and some of them are much later than the others. The verses of these hymns when used for sacrificial purposes are called *Mantras*. The Brahmanas which contain an explanation of the sacrificial ritual come next; but there was a very long interval between them and the hymns. Then we have the Aranyakas which contain the Upanishads. There are treatises of the latter name which are very modern and form by no means a part of the Vedic literature though sometimes they profess to do so. Later than these are the Srauta or sacrificial Sutras, and contemporaneous with them or somewhat later are the Grihya Sutras. The Dharma Sutras in which the religious and sometimes the civil law is laid down are still more modern. The Samhita and Brahmana of the Black Yajurveda

N.B.—"The Press having got no type with diacritical marks, the paper has been printed without them."—R. G. B.

contain the Mantra and Brahmana portions mixed together. Some of the *Mantras* may be as old as the later hymns of the Rigveda Samhita; but the Brahmana portion must be of about the same age as the Brahmanas of the Rigveda. Some of the hymns of the Atharva Veda may be as old as the later ones of the Rigveda; but others are considerably more modern. Buddhism rose in the latter part of the sixth century before Christ; and the death of Buddha took place about 477 B. C. The genuine Upanishads must be earlier than Buddhism. The grammarian Patanjali lived about 150 B.C. and Pânini, the author of the Sutras on grammar, must have preceded him by several centuries. Yaska, the author of the Nirukta, which contains an explanation of the difficult words in the hymns, must have flourished before Panini. From about the middle of the third century before Christ to about the end of the third after, Buddhism was the favourite religion of the masses. During that time Brahmanic literary and religious activity was a good deal impaired. In the fourth century Buddhism declined and there was a Brahmanic revival; and the Brahmans re-edited some of the books on the religious and the civil law which had been written in the form of prose sentences called Ŝûtras, and gave a new and more popular shape to them. Thus arose the metrical Smritis or Smritis composed in Anushtup-Slokas which now go by the name of Manu, Yajnavalkya and other sages of antiquity. They of course contained mostly the same matter as the old Dharma Sutras; but they brought the law up to the time. This species of literature having come into existence in this way, other numerous Smritis of the like nature came to be written subsequently. The old Puranas were also recast about the period, and a good many new ones written. The Mahabharata is mentioned by Panini and in Asvalayana's Grihya Sutras; but was consolidated into something like its present shape probably three or four centuries before Christ; but passages were

interpolated into it from time to time; and it must have been retouched at the time of the rivival.

CASTE.

More than four thousand years before Christ according to the latest researches, the Sanskrit-speaking people called the Aryas penetrated into India from the North-West. They were at first settled in Eastern Kabulistan and along the upper course of the Indus; and thence they gradually descended the river to the south and spread also to the east in the upper part of the country watered by the five rivers of the Panjab. Their progress at every step was resisted by another race or races which in the Rigveda are designated by the name of Dasyu or Dâsa. The Dasyus are contrasted with the Aryas and are represented as people of a dark complexion who were unbelievers, *i. e.*, did not worship the gods of the Aryas and perform the sacrifices, but followed another law. The Aryan gods Indra and Agni are frequently praised for having driven away the black people, destroyed their strongholds and given their possessions to the Aryas. "From day to day," it is said in one hymn, "he (Indra) drove the people who were black, all alike, from one habitation to another." Those who submitted were reduced to slavery, and the rest were driven to the fastnesses of mountains. The process was carried on in all parts of the country to which the Aryans penetrated. The old word *Dasa* came to denote a "slave" generally, and the word *Dasyu* acquired the significance of a "robber," as those aborigines who had betaken themselves to mountain fastnesses subsisted on robbery. The latter word came also to signify "one beyond the Aryan pale" as these tribes of robbers were. While the Aryans were in the Panjab they were divided into a good many tribes, each having a king of its own and a family or families of priests. There were among them three social grades or ranks. To the first belonged the priests, who composed *Brahmans* (with the accent on the

first syllable), *i.e.*, songs or hymns to the gods and knew how to worship them, and were called *Brahmans* (with the accent on the second syllable). The second grade was occupied by those who acquired political eminence and fought battles, and were called *Rajans*. All the other Aryas were referred to the third grade and were distinguished by the name of *Visas* or people generally. These three classes formed one community, and such of the aborigines as had yielded to the Aryas were tacked on to it as a fourth grade under the name of *Dasas*, which word had now come to signify slaves or servants. Such grades existed amongst ancient Persians also. In the course of time these grades became hereditary and acquired the nature of castes, and were called *Brahmanas, Rajanyas* and *Vaisyas* or descendants of the old *Brahmans, Rajans* or *Visas*. The fourth class came to be called Sudras, which probably was at first the name of the aboriginal tribe which had acquired a distinct position in the community, and was afterwards generalised. These four castes are mentioned in one of the latest hymns of the Rigveda. The first two formed definite classes with a definite sphere of duties and were the aristocracy of the community. Since the Vaisya class included all other Aryas, there was a tendency in it towards the formation of sub-classes or communities and possibly there were such sub-classes, which according to some formed independent castes. The Sudras being the aborigines, there were in all likelihood several castes amongt them corresponding to the several races which inhabited the country before the invasion of the Aryas. These were of course denied the privilege of keeping the sacred fire or performing the sacrifices; and were not allowed to read or study the Vedas. The two highest castes do not seem in the times to which the old religious literature refers to have split up into sub castes. No such are referred to in that literature, though they are supposed by some scholars to have existed. There were tribes of Kshatriyas or Rajanyas and

Gotras of Brahmanas; but no castes. With this social constitution the Aryas spread over the whole of Northern India, and the Sudra population incorporated with their community became so large that it influenced the future development of the country. The Sanskrit language was corrupted and the Vernaculars began to be formed.

The languages of Northern India including the Marathi are offshoots of the Sanskrit; and they were formed not by a course of gradual corruption and simplification such as we meet with in the case of a language spoken throughout its history by the same race, but by a wholesale corruption of Sanskrit sounds, *i.e.*, mispronunciation of Sanskrit words by a race the vocal organs of which were not habituated to utter those sounds, and by a generalization of such grammatical forms as were in common use through ignorance of the special forms. Thus arose in very ancient times the Prakrits including the Pali or the language of the sacred books of Southern Buddhists; and these have, in the course of time, become the modern Vernaculars. The phonetic difference between these and the old Prakrits is but slight when compared with that between the latter and the Sanskrit, which shows that there was, when the Prakrits were formed, a special cause in operation, *viz.*, the incorporation of alien races; and this cause has ceased to exist in later times. The Prakrits and through them the Vernaculars have got some special sounds and also words which are foreign to Sanskrit; and this points to the same conclusion. Thus then these dialects show that the new races that were incorporated with the Aryan community had to give up their own languages and learn those of their Aryan conquerors. The Prakrits and the Vernaculars bear the same relation to Sanskrit that the Romance languages, Italian, French, etc., bear to the Latin; and just as these were formed by communities composed of the old Romans and an overpoweringly large element of the Celtic and the Germanic

races, so were the languages of Northern India formed by mixed communities of Aryans and aborigines. As a matter of fact some of the vocal peculiarities of the makers of Prakrits are displayed by the people of the different Indian provinces at the present day. Thus like the former the Gujaratis of the present day cannot pronounce the Sanskrit sound *au* but always make *o* of it, the Bengali cannot utter the conjunct consonant in *Isvara* and other words and invariably changes it to a double consonant, making Issara of Isvara, the Desastha Brahmans of eastern Maharashtra pronounce a dental nasal as a cerebral, and the Sindhi and also the Bengali cannot utter *ksha* but must make *kkha* of it. The Bengali shows also the peculiarity of the old Magadhi speakers by his incapacity to utter the three different sibilants and his giving them all a palatal sound. This would show that among the speakers of the modern vernaculars there is such a large aboriginal element that it has overpowered the Aryan element; and they may as well be regarded as descendants of the aborigines as of the Aryas.

And this preponderating influence of the aborigines is to be accounted for not only by their large numbers but by the fact that men from the Aryan community frequently married Sudra wives though the marriages were considered inferior, and sometimes Sudra men married Aryan women. The fact that some of the Law-books allow of the former and prohibit the latter shows that in practice there must have been many such cases since the law never deals with imaginary circumstances but always such as are actual. The origin of certain castes is traced in those books to such marriages and it is even represented that under certain circumstances and after the lapse of a certain number of generations the offspring of those marriages can attain to the caste of the original progenitor. If then the descendant in the fifth or sixth generation of a child of a Sudra woman by a Brahman, Kshatriya or Vaisya man could become a Brahman, Kshatriya or Vaisya when such marriages

were permitted, it must be understood that there is some aboriginal blood flowing through the veins of the high-caste Hindus of the present day. To Southern India the Aryans penetrated at a comparatively late period, when communities and nations of aboriginal races had already been formed. They did not settle there in large numbers and thus were unable thoroughly to influence the latter and incorporate them into their community. Hence they preserved their own languages and many of the peculiarities of their civilization; and these the Aryans themselves had to adopt in the course of time. The Kanarese, the Tamil, the Telugu and the Malayalam belong to an entirely non-Aryan stock of languages.

It was not possible in the nature of things that the castes should always follow the profession or calling which brought them into existence and which is laid down for them in the ancient Law-books. The Brahmans alone could officiate as priests at sacrifices and in the domestic ceremonies; and a great many devoted themselves to that occupation. There were those who preferred plain living and high thinking, and taking a vow of poverty devoted their lives to study. But there were still others who took to agriculture, trade and other much meaner occupations and also to politics; and there was in the olden times even a Brahmanic dynasty reigning at Pataliputra. But politics and war were the special occupation of the Kshatriyas. They also devoted themselves to philosophy and literature; and in the Upanishads they are several times mentioned as teachers of religious philosophy and Brahmans as learners. In one place it is said that Brahmavidya was first cultivated by them. It was on account of this philosophic culture that religious reformers sprang from their ranks. Buddha was a Kshatriya and so was Mahavira, the founder of Jainism. Vasudeva whose name is closely connected with the Bhakti school either as the name of the Supreme Being or as a teacher, was a Kshatriya of the Yâdava clan. A

Brahman may, says Apastamba, study the Vedas under a Kshatriya or Vaisya teacher when reduced to that necessity. The Vaisyas followed the occupation of trade and agriculture. The Sudras are condemned to be the slaves or servants of the other castes by Brahmanic Law-books. But as a matter of fact since by that name several social groups or castes were designated, it was impossible that that occupation should have been enough for them or have satisfied them. They often pursued an independent calling and became artizans. Patanjali mentions carpenters and blacksmiths as belonging to the Sudra class. The lowest of them, the Chandalas were in the same degraded condition as they are now.

Endogamy, *i.e.*, marriage within and not without the limits of a group, is a characteristic of caste. But as already stated a man from the higher castes could marry a Sudra woman under the law, and generally a marriage connection could be formed by a man belonging to any of the higher castes with a woman of any of the lower castes. The marriages were, however, considered to be of an inferior nature, and the issue took rank after that of the wife of the same caste. Marriages in the reverse order, *i.e.*, of a man belonging to a lower caste with a woman of a higer were, like the marriage of a Sudra man with an Aryan woman alluded to before, strictly prohibited by the Law-books ; but since they speak of the issue of such marriages and give the law with reference to them, there must have been in practice many cases of the kind. After a time however these became obsolete, and the marriage of a man of a higher or Aryan caste with a Sudra woman which had been allowed by the law before and frequently practised, was also prohibited by the later legislators. And in practice all marriages between members of different castes gradually went out of use.

The Brahmanic religious writers mention a good many castes which they assert sprang from intermarriages

between persons of different castes. The origin thus assigned to the castes is in a good many cases evidently fanciful. Some of them such as Vaideha and Magadha must have arisen from the locality; others such as Rathakara or 'chariot-maker' from the occupation, and still others such as Chandala from the race. But it will not do to throw discredit over the whole statement. The Indian authors are always inclined to reduce everything to a preconceived system. The castes are four, and if we find many more in real life they must have sprung by inter-marriages from these four. This is the theory on which they have gone; and certainly its application to all cases must be wrong. But in order to render the conception of such a theory possible, there must have been a few cases actually of castes springing up from such marriages. But which of the castes mentioned by them are mixed castes of this nature it is not possible to determine. All the so-called mixed castes are considered Sudras, which shows that some of them at least were aboriginal tribes which had become castes. Similarly some castes are named which are said to have sprung from *Vratyas* or persons who had set themselves free from the Brahmanic ordinances about the orders, *i. e.*, had in practice given up the Brahmanic religion. The same observation as that made above is applicable to this case: *viz.*, some castes must have arisen from this cause, but which we cannot say.

Commensality within and not without a group is in almost all cases another characteristic of castes. But in the olden times we see from the Mahabharata and other works that Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas could eat the food cooked by each other. Manu lays down generally that a twice-born should not eat the food cooked by a Sudra (iv. 223); but he allows that prepared by a Sudra who has attached himself to one, or is one's barber, milkman, slave, family friend, and co-sharer in the profits of agriculture, to be partaken (iv. 253). The implication that

lies here is that the three higher castes could dine with each other. Gautama, the author of a Dharmasutra, permits a Brahman's dining with a twice-born (Kshatriya or Vaisya) who observes his religious duties (17, 1). Apastamba, another writer of the class, having laid down that a Brahman should not eat with a Kshatriya and others, says that according to some, he may do so with men of all the Varnas who observe their proper religious duties except with the Sudras. But even here there is a counter-exception, and as allowed by Manu, a Brahman may dine with a Sudra who may have attached himself to him with a holy intent (I-18. 9, 13, 14).

In modern times it is of the essence of caste that there should be connubium only within its limits and commensality also except in the case of a few sub-castes. But if in ancient times there could be inter-marriages between the three Aryan castes and also in times earlier between all the four, and inter-dining between the first three and some individuals of the fourth, in what respect are they to be considered as castes ? Only in this that a certain dignity of position was transmitted from father to son and that marriage with a woman from a family of a lower hereditary position was considered to be of an inferior nature. For a long time the four castes preserved their original Vedic character as social grades though heredity had become associated with them. But we can plainly observe the operation of strong tendencies to greater exclusiveness, in the gradual contraction of the sphere of connubium and commensality which we have noticed above. We can also discover the operation of causes which lead to the multiplication of castes. The difference of locality gave rise, as we have seen, to a difference of caste in the case of Sudras. Brahmanic law-givers represent several provinces such as Avanti, Magadha, Surashtra and the Deccan as unholy and consequently not fit to be inhabited by the Aryas (Baudhayana's Dharmas-

1· 2· 13, 14), and persons who have gone to others such as Pundra and Vanga are considered positively to have lost caste and cannot be re-admitted except by the performance of certain purificatory rights. This shows a tendency to the formation of separate castes among the Aryas, on account of change of locality. The Magadha Brahmans are spoken of even in sacrificial Sutras as a degraded class. Udichcha (Northern) Brahmans are frequently mentioned in Buddhist Pali works in a manner to show that they constituted an order or even a Jati (caste) of Brahmans. This class or caste seems to have been regarded as highly respectable. The operation of race in the formation of castes we have already observed. The original Sudra caste and a good many others that afterwards came to be included in it were due to this cause. As the Aryans spread far and wide in the country these two causes came into full operation. A third cause is the same as that which brought about the formation of the Vratya castes. When the ordinances and usages of a caste are violated by some members of it, the others excommunicate them, or regard them as having ceased to belong to their caste. This cause came into active operation probably during the time when early Buddhism enjoyed ascendancy and was followed by the Kshatriya and Vaisya castes. Animal sacrifice was prohibited by the great Asoka in the first half of the third century before Christ; and along with that some of the ordinary usages were given up. The Brahmanas must have looked upon those who did so as having lost caste; and this fact is probably at the bottom of the view held by them that in this Kali age there are only two Varnas, the Brahmans and the Sudras, the other two having disappeared. The prevalence of Jainism and some of the other religious systems must have contributed to the same result. And the laying down of certain sins liable to lead to excommunication in the Law-books, shows that the practice must have prevailed.

A fourth cause also came into operation in the early centuries of the Christian era or even before. It was the formation of Srenis or trade guilds. They are mentioned in some of the Law-books and in the Nasik and Kanheri cave inscriptions. In these we have an allusion to a *Tailika S'reni* and a *Malika S'reni, i.e.*, the guilds of oil-makers and gardeners. These guilds must have a regular organization, since charitable persons deposited money with them for the benefit of Buddhist monks, on which they paid interest from generation to generation. And in the course of time the guilds of oilmen and gardeners became the castes of Telis and Malis. Some or a good many—not all, as has been supposed by some writers,—of the modern castes have got an organization with a headman or President, and this they owe to their having sprung from such guilds or imitated their practice. The followers of each occupation thus formed a caste and the number multiplied. A fifth cause has also been in operation for some centuries. Religious schools or sects have given rise to different castes. The followers of the Madhyandina S'akha or rescension of the White Yajur-Veda form a different caste from that of the followers of the Kanva rescension, and those of Madhva from that of the followers of S'amkara, though there is commensality between them except in some cases.

These five causes have been in brisk operation during more than two thousand years, unchecked by any influence of a unifying nature; and the principle of division has become strongly ingrained in Hindu Society, and perhaps in the Hindu blood. During all this period various religious and philosophical sects have been founded. Religion has been developing and not quite on wrong lines, and spreading elevating ideas. But all these sects including that of the Buddhists occupied themselves with man's eternal interests, and thought it no concern of theirs to promote his worldly interests. The Buddhists and also some schools of the Vaishnavas considered caste to be of no value. Men from

all castes were admitted into the fraternity of Buddhist monks, and the Vaishnavas disregarded caste restrictions in their dealings with each other. But the reformation of Hindu society by relaxing the bondage of caste was not an object with them. Thus the result is that Hindu society, is now cut up into more than three thousand castes. Each of them is a community by itself, having no connubium or commensality with another and has developed peculiar manners and tastes which distinguish it still further from the rest and render social intercourse impracticable. Thus the two hundred and forty millions of Hindus living in India form about three thousand distinct communities, each on an average composed of eighty thousand people, *i.e.*, about two-thirds of the population of a single town of ordinary size such as Poona.

The germs of the caste system existed among some of the principal races in the West. For a long period there was no connubium between the Patricians and Plebians in Rome; and traces have been discovered, we are told, of the existence of restrictions as to inter-marriage and eating together among the Greeks, Germans and Russians. But those germs were trampled under foot there, while here they have found a congenial soil and grown into a huge bunyan tree throwing its dark shadow on the whole extent of this vast country. And what is the reason? This is what M. Senart, the great French scholar who has recently published an essay on Caste is represented to say about it.

"M. Senart shows how the growth of strong, political and national feelings constantly tended, in the West, to weaken and at last succeeded in removing, these (caste) restrictions. He suggests that the absence of such feelings in India may be one reason why the disabilities have not also there been gradually softened away. It is, indeed, very suggestive for the right understanding of Indian History, that they should, on the contrary, have become so permanent a factor in Indian life."

M. Senart's theory appears to be that the innumerable castes of the present day existed even in very olden times and that the four Varnas or grades belonged to pre-Vedic times when the ancestors of the Parsis and Hindus lived together, and were traditionally handed down to the Vedic times; and these traditional grades were fused together with the numberless castes that really existed so as to form what he calls a "hybrid" system. The modern castes have not grown out of the old Varnas or grades. Hence he speaks of the caste restrictions as "not having been softened away." But agreeing as I do with Oldenberg, a German scholar who has expressed his dissent from M. Senart, and believing that the view I have put forth above is alone sustained by the evidence available, I should say that "the old slight restrictions have in the course of time become very heavy fetters that render all movement impossible." And this is the result of the entire absence of "political and national feelings." Pride and other feelings that divide man from man have had full swing in the history of India and sympathy or fellow-feeling has been confined to the narrowest possible sphere.

MEAT AND DRINK.

Connected with the question of caste is that of the use of meat and drink. It is generally supposed that abstinence from meat is an essential condition of Brahmanism. But according to all authorities the Brahmans and other twice-born used meat in ancient times. The flesh of five species of five-clawed animals is permitted to be eaten in the Dharma Sutras; and even beef is allowed by Apastamba (I-17. 30, 37). Most of the sacrifices of the old Vedic religion were animal sacrifices; and the animals killed by suffocation for the purpose were goats, sheep, cows or bulls, and horses. It is impossible that the idea of offering meat to gods could have originated unless men themselves liked it and used it. But the influence of Buddhism, and later, of Jainism threw discredit on the practice; and those who re-edited Hindu Law in

the fourth century of the Christian era and later, *i.e.*, the writers of the Smritis of Manu and Yajnavalkya lay down the old permissive precept, but hedge it round with so many restrictions that it amounts almost to prohibition. But in modern times the Brahmans of Bengal, Mithila, Kashmir and Sindh do use meat; while in countries which were for a long time under the influence of Buddhism and Jainism, such as Gujarat, even the lower castes abstain from it. But the killing of cows or bulls for any purpose whether for sacrifice or meat went out of use early; and was prohibited in the books. Similarly in the Vedic times the popular drinks were *Soma*, a species of intoxicating liquid, and also *Sura* or fermented liquor. This last however was soon given up; and we find the use of it enumerated among the seven deadly sins even in such an old work as Yaska's Nirukta.

Position and Influence of Women.

In a list of the old teachers or Acharyas of the Rig-veda, given in Asvalayana's Grihyasutra, occur the names of three women, Gargi Vachaknavi, Vadava Pratitheyi, and Sulabha Maitreyi. The works of some of the male teachers mentioned therein have come down to us, and those of a few others are alluded to in other works; wherefore it must be admitted that they were actually living individuals. So these ladies were not imaginary persons but really existed and taught. Gargi Vachaknavi is mentioned in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad as having been a member of a large assembly of learned Rishis held at the Court of Janaka, King of Videhas, and taking active part in the debate on Brahman or the Universal Essence, that is reported to have taken place. Sulabha Maitreyi is introduced in the Mahabharata as discoursing on Brahman with King Janaka. In another part of the same Upanishad Maitreyi, the wife of Yajnavalkya is represented to have asked him when he expressed his intention to retire from family life and divide his property between her and

another wife, whether wealth could confer immortality on her. On Yajnavalkya's denying it she said she did not care for that which would not make her immortal, and begged of Yajnavalkya to explain to her what he knew about Brahman. And so Yajnavalkya discourses on it to her and she interrupts him with intelligent questions. This discourse is famous and often referred to in the Advaita Vedanta taught by Samkaracharya. Draupadi is represented as carrying on a keen controversy with Yudhishthira about God's dealings with men. The poet would not have brought forward such a scene, unless in his time there were women able to speak with such intelligence and knowledge as Draupadi shows. Among the Buddhists there was an order of nuns as of monks, and there exist works written by the female religious elders. All this shows that women in those days were not condemned to ignorance, but took part in the discussion of religious and philosophic questions, and even appeared in assemblies of men.

A wife and husband became by their marriage *Dampati* or "two masters of the house." "The gods gave her to him (the bridegroom) for house-keeping; their union was as permanent and intimate as that of the Earth and the Heaven; and she became his friend and companion." This is the substance of the Vedic Mantras repeated by the bridegroom at the marriage. And in keeping with the ideal here shadowed forth, the Vedic ritual makes her a partner in all the religious duties. The husband cannot keep the sacred fire without her; her presence and co-operation are necessary in all the great sacrifices. The fire kindled on the occasion of marriage had to be kept up; all the domestic ceremonies concerning him, her, and the children were to be performed on it, and when either died, he or she was to be burned by means of that fire. The fire was thus a standing symbol of their union. This ideal of the relations between the two was in all likelihood observed even in worldly matters in the well-conducted families as the fol-

lowing praise contained in the Mahabharata indicates. "*She* is a wife who is diligent in household duties, *she* is a wife who has children, *she* is a wife to whom her husband is the breath of life, *she* is a wife who is devoted to her husband. A wife is one-half of a man, a wife is the best of friends, a wife is at the root of the accomplishment of the three objects of life (rightousness, worldly prosperity and satisfaction of desire) ; a wife is at the root when final deliverance is attained. Those who have wives perform their duties, those who have wives become householders, those who have wives enjoy peace, those who have wives are prosperous. In solitude they are friends, whose conversation is sweet, in religious duties they are fathers, and in illness they are mothers. To a traveller they are a repose in the wilderness. He who has a wife is trustworthy ; therefore wives are our highest resource." (Mahabharata, I. 74, 39, &c.). When Buddha was going about preaching his gospel, his great supporters were women, who gave him and his numerous disciples many gifts and fed them at their houses. One such female devotee frequently mentioned in the Pali Buddhistic books was a rich lady of the name of Visakha who resided at Sravasti, the capital of Kosala. She had many healthy sons and grandsons and was looked upon as an auspicious person. All men invited her to dinner first, whenever there was a sacrifice or any festive ceremonial. This gives an idea of the influence and popular esteem that a woman could attain. Her husband is nowhere mentioned and she is represented as doing things of her own motion, as also those females who belonging to respectable families gave up a worldly life and became nuns. This shows that women enjoyed a good deal of independence. In later times too a good many benefactors of the fraternity of Buddhistic monks were women and their names are found inscribed on the monuments of those times.

The picture has also another side. Though a wife was highly respected, a woman as such was held in little esteem. In the Taittiriya Samhita it is stated that women are unsubstantial and consequently excluded from inheritance. Yaska gives two views, one agreeing with this, and another to the effect that they can inherit. Those who hold the former, say that daughters on that account are exposed, given or sold; but the others retort that sons also are treated in the same way, and give the instance of Suna*h*-sepa who was sold by his father to Rohita, the son of Harischandra, a king of the solar race, to be sacrificed to Varuna in his place. Thus it will be seen that the general opinion of the Aryas was wavering and had not become definitely hostile to females. In the Rigveda times girls were free and could choose their own husbands, and enjoyed a great deal of independence. But a daughter is always a source of anxiety to the father on account of the difficulty of finding a suitable husband. Hence even in such an old work as the Aitareya Brahmana, while the wife is called a friend or companion, a daughter is spoken of as [the source of] humiliation. In the Mahabharata " women " it is said, " while enjoying themselves with men, deceive them; no man who has once got into their hands, can be free. All the wiles of Sambara, Namuchi, and Kumbhinas are to be found in women. They laugh when a man laughs weep when he weeps; even one they do not like, they subdue by endearing words. Usanas or Brihaspati does not teach a device that women do not know by their natural wit. What is false they pronounce to be true, what is true they make out to be false; how is it possible for men, O brave one, to watch them? There is nothing more wicked than women; women are a burning fire; they are the illusive jugglery of Maya; put the edge of a razor, poison serpent and fire in one scale, and women in the other." (XIII.39 and 40). In actual life the relations between man

and woman are so varied that it is quite possible that under certain circumstances a man should speak thus about a woman. But when the legislator Manu is equally hard on women, it must be acknowledged that the estimate of the old Arya, of womanly nature is not flattering to them generally. They are debarred from reading the Vedas; any religious rite in which they alone are concerned is directed to be performed without Vedic Mantras. Even the Bhagavad Gita gives expression to the general belief that it is only a sinful soul that is born as a woman, Vaisya or Sudra. Thus women began to suffer in the estimation of men about the time of Yaska; and the downward movement which then commenced resulted in their being subjected to definite disabilities by the fourth century of the Christian era when the metrical Smriti of Manu was written and the Mahabharata retouched; and it has continued to this day and rendered their condition still more deplorable.

AGE OF MARRIAGE.

Girls.

When the Mantras addressed by the bridegroom to the bride at the time of marriage, the substance of some of which I have given above, were composed, there can be no question that the bride must have been a girl who had arrived at an age of discretion and could understand what marriage meant. In the time of Asvalayana, Apastamba and others who in their Grihya Sutras give the details of the marriage ceremony and say nothing about the age of the bride, we have to suppose that then too she was a grown up girl, and this is confirmed by their allowing intercourse on the fourth day after marriage. Hiranyakesin and Jaimini prescribe in express terms that the bride should be a mature girl who has been chaste; while Gobhila, Gobhilaputra and the Manava Grihya lay down that a girl not having intercourse previously with a man should be married. This also means that the girl

should be one who has reached womanhood. "But," they add, "it is best to marry one who has not arrived at womanhood." Manu and other writers of metrical Smritis require that a girl should be married before she has arrived at maturity. In these various injunctions we observe a regular downward course. Asvalayana is silent about the age of the girls; and the reason must be that late marriages which the Mantras that were repeated and the rule about intercourse on the fourth day presuppose, must have been a matter of course and alone in practice. When, however, Hiranyakesin expressly enjoins the marriage of mature girls only, the opinion of the Aryas about the time when he lived must have begun to become unsettled, and early marriages to be thought of as better. But when Gobhila first of all lays down a precept which in effect is the same as that of Hiranyakesin, and afterwards recommends an immature bride as the best, the opinion in favour of early marriage must have become more predominant. And it went on acquiring still greater predominance, until when the metrical Smritis were written, or the religious law was revised, it had completely triumphed and the other was driven out of the field. Manu, however, as the earliest of the writers of these works, has not entirely forgotten late marriages, and allows under certain circumstances a girl to remain unmarried for three years after she has attained womanhood. And since his time late marriages have become entirely unknown, and in these days girls are sometimes married even when they are a year or two old.

Boys.

The old law was that after Upanayana or the ceremony of making a boy over to a *guru* or preceptor, he should study the Vedas for twelve, twenty-four, or even forty-eight years and then relinquish the *Brahmacharya* or student's vow; or that he should give up the vow after he had

completed his studies without reference to the number of years he took to do it. It was then that he was allowed to marry. The Upanayana ceremony was performed in the case of a Brahman boy when he was at least eight years old and in the case of a Kshatriya or Vaisya boy when he was eleven or twelve. As the lowest period of twelve years for a student's life must have been fixed because the studies generally occupied so much time, a young man was free to marry when he was at least twenty years old. But as a rule he entered into that relation at a later age and Manu lays down thirty or twenty-four years as the proper age. Now here the law up to the time of Manu was entirely in favour of late marriages in the case of boys. But gradually the duration of student-life was curtailed; until ~~now in the~~ Maratha country it lasts for three or four days only, and the relinquishment ceremony (Samavartana) is performed on the fourth or the fifth day. The Upanayana ceremony and the Vedic study have thus for a long time become a solemn farce, and a boy is married when he is about twelve years old. It is considered necessary for the reputation of a family that the boys in it should be married at about that age, and the delay of marriage till about sixteen is regarded as throwing discredit on it.

BURNING OF WIDOWS.

The custom of burying or burning a widow with the dead body of her husband prevailed among a good many ancient Aryan races settled in Europe. It was in practice among the Teutonic tribes and also among the non-Aryan Scythians. But in the whole of the Rigveda there is no allusion to the practice. Still it must have prevailed among the Indian Aryas before the time when the hymns were composed. For there are two verses, one of which occurs in the Atharva Veda Samhita and in the Taittiriya Aranyaka, and the other in the latter and in the Rigveda Samhita (Ath. V., XVIII, 3—1, Tait. Ar. pp. 651

and 652 Ed. Bibl. Ind. Rigv. X, 18, 8) of which the first is repeated when the wife of an Agnihotrin is made to lie down by the side of her dead husband on the funeral pile, and the other when she is raised from it by her brother-in-law or her husband's pupil or an old servant (Asv. Gr. IV. 2, 18). The sense of the first is, "O mortal, this woman, desirous to go to the world of husbands, lies down by the side of thee who art dead in accordance with ancient usage (*Purana dharma*); give her children and wealth;" and of the second, "rise, O woman, for the world of the living, thou art lying by the side of this dead [man]. The wifehood of a second husband stares thee in the face." The whole ceremony is a mimicry of the once practised custom of burning a widow; and the fact of raising the woman from the pile shows that it was afterwards given up. The word *Didhishu* which occurs in the latter verse is taken in an etymological sense by European scholars and Sayana in his commentary on the Rigveda, and made applicable to the dead husband; but in the commentary on the Taittiriya Aranyaka, Sayana takes it in the sense of "a second husband"; and that is the usual sense of the word and that alone is appropriate here. But I must not go into the reasons in this paper intended for the general reader. Thus the Vedic Aryas had consciously given up the custom of burning widows; and there is no trace of it in the olde[r] books on the religious law. But it must have prevaile[d] among some of the many Aryan tribes that migrated t[o] India or among the aboriginal Sudras; and there is a[n] indication of it in the story of Madri, one of the two wive[s] of Pandu having burned herself with her dead husband and in another part of the Mahabharata where a femal[e] dove is represented to have burned herself with her de[ad] mate. She went like a human widow to the "world o[f] husbands" and becoming re-united with him, lived happil[y] with him. But when the deterioration of the Aryan mora[l]

feeling had established itself, the custom was generally adopted from the tribes among whom it existed, and the precept about the burning of widows was laid down in some of the metrical Smritis, though, however, not witho a protest from others. But the later Pandits in their exposition of the law denied the authoritativeness of the protesting texts and decided that the burning of widows was lawful. And so it became the general practice, though it was optional and looked upon by some as an irrational act, as is shown by the beautiful passage against it in Bana's Kadambari ; and was eventually prohibited by the British Government in 1830.

Widow Marriage.

We have seen that the wife of the dead Agnihotrin was raised from the funeral pile by a promise of remarriage. The text which refers to this is one of the indications contained in the Vedas as to the existence of the practice of widow-marriage. There is another in the Atharva Veda in which it is stated that "when a woman who has had a husband before, marries another after his death, they are never separated from each other if they perform the rite of *aja panchaudana.*" In the Aitareya Brahmana we have a third passage in which it is said that "one man may have many wives, but one woman cannot have many husbands *at one and the same time.*" This last expression implies that she can have many at different times. The remarried woman was called a *Punarbhu* and the word occurs in the Atharva Veda and in the metrical Smritis. The marriage of widows however is not allowed by an express precept in the older works on the religious law. Of the metrical Smritis, two, that of Parasara and Narada permit it ; but all the rest are opposed. The fact appears to be that in ancient times, the practice of widow-marriages did exist and it continued to be followed up to the time when the metrical Smritis were composed. But in the meanwhile it

had come to be considered not respectable or had fallen into disrepute. Hence a controversy arose between the legislators. Some ran it down entirely ; but Manu argues with those who held it to be legal and says that the giving of a widow in marriage is not mentioned in the law about marriage, and makes a compromise by allowing the remarriage of a widowed girl who has not arrived at maturity. Others, however, represented by Parasara and Narada stoutly defended the practice and laid down a direct precept to legalise it. The writers on the other side admitted the fact of the existence of remarriages in so far as they put into the list of sons a *Paunarbhàva* or one born of a Punarbhu or a remarried woman. But they gave him a low rank; and allowed him a right to inheritance on the failure of those above him, or a fourth part of the estate if they existed. Yajnavalkya even rules that the debts of a man who has deceased should be paid by him who marries his wife. Thus there is no question that the practice did exist at the time when these works were written, that is from about the fourth to about the sixth century of the Christian era. It was not forgotten till the beginning of the eleventh century. For in a Jaina work written in 1014 A. D. to discredit Brahmanism and glorify Jainism, a certain legend is narrated in which a man is represented t[o] have been excluded from the table by his fellows because he had become a recluse without going through the previous order of a married householder. He was advised to marry, but as no one would give his daughter to such a[n] old man as he was, it was suggested that he should marry a widow, and in support of the suggestion the text from Parasara legalizing such a marriage was quoted. But though Parasara legalized the practice, it was not rehabilitated and continued to be held in disrepute. Hence it gradually fell into disuse and was entirely forgotten in later times.

We have thus seen how the disabilities of women gradually multiplied. But the tale does not end here. In still later times the disregard for the life and happiness of the female creature grew until it became almost abnormal; and female infants were destroyed in certain provinces and girls to the number of a hundred or two were married to one man in another. The first practice has now been put an end to by the British Government; but the second still flourishes. Again in these days a man marries a girl of twelve or thirteen after he has lost his first wife; she dies after a time, and another is brought into the house; this also meets with the same fate, and a fourth is married when probably the man is past fifty and even verging on sixty; and she is left a widow before she has arrived at womanhood or soon after. Sometimes negotiations for the new connection are entered into in the burning ground while the dead body of the old wife is being consumed by fire. Now it is a fact that a connection between a girl of thirteen or fourteen years and a man of thirty-five or above proves fatal to the life of the girl. A great many instances are now before my mind's eye in which when a man married a second girl-wife, he had soon to marry a third, and a fourth. The husband thus causes the death of the poor girl. And still even highly educated men of the present day do not scruple to resort to the practice. It is in their power to marry a grown-up widow and make an unfortunate female creature happy, and secure for themselves a suitable companion, and to shun the guilt of causing the death of an innocent and helpless creature. But no, they have not the courage to withstand the criticism of the caste,—criticism, I say, not persecution, for in reality there is very little of that.

The downward course which began many centuries ago has landed us here. And anxiously thinking about the matter, one asks himself why should this degeneration have

gone on continuously for a long time without impediment. The reason seems to be that the tyranny under which the Hindus have lived from times immemorial has weakened their moral fibre if not entirely destroyed it. We have been subject to a three-fold tyranny; political tyranny, priestly tyranny, and a social tyranny or the tyranny of caste. Crushed down by this no man has dared to stand and assert himself. Even religious reformers have shunned the legitimate consequences of their doctrines to avoid coming into conflict with the established order of things. The promptings of his better nature or the pangs of conscience a Hindu has had to suppress for fear of the three agencies, and now the better nature has almost ceased to prompt or the conscience to bite. At present, however, though we live under a foreign Government we enjoy a freedom of thought and action, such as we never enjoyed before under our own Hindu princes. But have we shown a capacity to shake ourselves free from priestly and social tyranny? I am afraid, not much. But this is certain, that unless we rouse our conscience and cultivate the higher feelings of our nature and, with the strength derived from these, stand erect against priests and caste, there is no hope of our being able to turn back the current of deterioration and degradation that has been flowing from the very olden times and increasing in force as it advances.

II.—On Social Reform; a Statement.

By the Honourable Rai Bahadur P. Anandacharlu
Vidya Vinodi, B.L., C.I.E.,

Member, Imperial Legislative Council, Madras.

It is indisputable that the desire for improvement, under the designation of social reform, is wide-spread. The programme of its aims and objects has been expanding year after year. It has brought within its scope many items which—strictly speaking—may be said rather to relate to matters of convenience, of decency, of taste, and of thrift. On the principle, implied by the inclusion of these latter, the list admits of much further—I had almost said, indefinite—extension, involving changes down to such insignificant things as the use, by our respectable women, of umbrellas and slippers when, in making friendly calls or attending at marriage and other ceremonies, they have to walk, during the mid-day heat, over distances far too short for coaching, but far too long for pedestrian performance, barefooted and without a shelter for the head, as at present; for, in respect of "time-honored," minutely regulative rules and in respect of the element of religiosity running through or coloring nearly every event of life, our community may be described, without exaggeration, as occupying almost the first place among the world's civilised people and to be, on that account, out of tune with—if not lso stolidly impervious to—modern ideas or rather the deas that have come upon us along with our Western ulers. But, I think, it will be readily granted that the ulk of these features are features on which no serious, laborate or "learned" controversy has arisen or could rise. To speak with precision, *they have really no two des* and they rest, almost entirely, on *vis inertiae*, pure and

simple. If they, nevertheless, hold their ground as yet, as they in actuality do, it is (1) because a fictitious importance and an adventitious notion of corresponding difficulty get imparted to them by virtue of their place alongside of the more momentous and essential questions of reform and (2) because, a good number of those who are the virtual leaders or trusted guides in their respective sets and grades, which constitute our society and which, for purposes of inter-marriage and inter-dining, are mutually exclusive, seem *not* to be impressed with the urgency of betterment under these heads, in the degree calculated to coerce them into making up their minds. In my judgment, desirable as are changes on these and similar lines to make ideal or perfect men and women, one need not worry oneself or become despondent, if they are somewhat postponed; for, such of them as have a practical side are sure to follow in the wake and almost on the heels of success, as regards the more vital, complex and controversial problems, when these latter get solved or get near to being solved. It is human nature—at least it is the second nature of most men of the easy-going sort, who constitute the majority even among the intelligent and the cultured in every community—to unconsciously overlook or insensibly underrate lesser considerations when greater topics clamour for and demand the best part of their attention. It is, further, not quite so manageable in practice, as some people may wish, to get up an adequate degree of earnestness and readiness for instantaneous action on these minor points, especially when they are in juxtaposition with burning themes, on whic[h] men of equal intelligence and equal honesty are radicall[y] divided and take opposite sides or are visibly unconvince[d] and therefore lukeworm. It may therefore not be a[n] altogether improper query whether—speaking seriously—there is not something of a waste of power in vehement[ly] enthusing on these points or impatiently losing temper a[t]

the paucity of results, so disproportionate to the strength of advocacy or disappointing when regard is had for the evident weakness of the case assailed.

One serious drawback which, to my mind, has told heavily all along the line and is apt to tell equally so for a long time, if things are left as they are, is that in these minor, as in graver, matters the effort has been, almost solely, on the part of *males*; and it is a feeling, which I cannot get rid of, that, so long as *this* is the case, so long shall we be working as with the lever without the fulcrum. A good percentage or a strong contingent of self-reliant, self-respecting and—let me add—self-assertive womanhood is what I look upon as that fulcrum; and it is my conviction that, with them for co-workers and—if I may say so—for active and belligerent mal-contents, the rate and amount of success ought to astound the sceptic and the sanguine alike. This indispensable and co-ordinate or contributory strength, at least in matters which involve *their* interests—and these cover most part of the battle-ground—can come about, only if we stoutly and self-lessly resolve to re-habilitate our women—of course with such modifications as the altered conditions of the present day would necessitate—*in respect of their claims* (1) *to education and* (2) *to property which they may, consciously and correctly, call their own*; for, I maintain,—and I hope soon to make it good—that the original, excellent provisions under these heads have been ingeniously whittled away and superseded—not to say, perverted—by later Smrithi-writers and Smrithi-expounders in lugubrious, though honest, apprehensions of degenerate times, which they feared were coming after them, and which they set themselves the task of anticipating, according to their lights.

If knowledge is power as held by Lord Bacon in the fulness of his philosophic wisdom and if property is also power as affirmed by Lord Macaulay, on the basis of his

study and mastery of matters in which he was quite at home, it cannot be that those dicta are true only as regards one-half of the intellects on the Indian soil but false as regards the other half. Nor am I woman enough to experience that ignorance, wedded to dependence on others for even bare subsistence, is a boon conducive to virtue, to happiness, to domestic duties and to the obligations of hospitality, laid specially on the Hindu housewife by the Aryan Faith.

As an earnest of what might be accomplished by the two factors, *viz.*, education and possession of property which absolves the possessor from dependence, even for bare sustenance, on grasping, to-the-woman-niggardly and autocratic male masters, one may point to how—even within the present very circumscribed opportunities and facilities—many a girl-widow in our parts has been able to score in resisting the relentless razor in its attempted havoc on her head of hair. Cases—by no means too few or disproportionate for the advantages secured—may be cited in which, when the girls, far more than their guardians and often in spite of those guardians, put their foot down and claimed to hold their own against being dispossessed of that "ornament of nature" along with the marriage symbol and other articles of embellishments in the profaned name of religion and of morality, they decisively had their own way, without themselves being outlawed, or the families to which they belonged and th circle of friends and acquaintances that mixed with them be ing cut dead. Even unlettered womankind have been foun to come round and become reconciled to the altered situa tion, when the revolt—I should prefer to call it the crusad —proceeded from the would-be victims under the forc ful influence of even the present limited degree of culture intelligence and of assured proprietary independence especially when the claimants to this immunity from th

inhuman treatment showed a decided tendency towards a life of piety and towards literary and other innocently-diverting pursuits. I do not say that the rights of grumble went unexercised. The priests, I dare say, quoted Vyasa's text:—

विधवाकबरीबन्धोभर्तृबन्धाय जायते ।
शिरसोवपनंतस्मात् कार्यं विधवया तथा॥

Vidhavakabareebandho bharthrubandhaya jayateh,
Sirasovapanam thasmath karyam vidhavaya tatha.

Meaning:—The hair of the widow made up into knots or plaits, would act as fetters on the husband. Hence the widow should cause her head to be shaved.

The grandmothers of both sexes—ever on the alert to make a mickle of trifles—were not slow to take solemn notice or thunder out their customary anathemas. Those good souls too, who are so intensely and heroically unselfish as to be habitually more busy with other people's affairs than their own, readily contributed their expected mite to keep up the "venerable" nine days' surprise and scandal. Faces were drawn, as in duty bound, abnormally long. Noses and chins, as is their wont in such contingencies, went up high into the air. The waggish tongue, as usual, waxed -orious with redoubled captiousness. But the girls, reliant on their innate or newly-acquired strength, od their ground and went through their period of bulation and suspense, which they felt sure would be ut shortlived, with exemplary patience and unperturbed juanimity. They were soon rewarded by what ought to a sight to the gods. The distorted and upturned faces nd facial furniture resumed their accustomed dimensions nd pose, while the voice of growl and gossip got lower nd lower in key and finally died out into its wonted impo-ence. What has thus happened in a few cases in one sphere ght happen again and again and in many more spheres,

and turn into a rule what are now but exceptions—apart from what males may choose to do or *not* to do—if, as regards education and as regards property-independence, our mothers, wives, sisters and daughters obtain their due as the descendants of the Aryans of old and if we, the males, would only abdicate a little of those all-absorbing sovereign rights which we claim for ourselves by the instinct of nature and by the pride and insolence of sex.

For all this tremendous handicap, I agree that it is highly expedient to be continually placing before the public eye, a list of wrongs—great and small alike—that require to be righted, as serving the important purpose of reminding those concerned as to how much of legitimate expectations yet remains to be accomplished before a feeling of undisturbed complacency may be allowed to develop an settle down.

Now, as to what seem to me to be the graver problem These are :—

(1) Early marriages.

(2) Re-marriages of widows.

(3) Liberty for our countrymen to travel or soj in foreign lands.

(4) Women's rights of property.

(5) Their culture.

At any rate, these I select for consideratio premise, at once and as applying equally to fo topics, that on each of them, the last disputatious wor apprehend, has been already said from the point of vie Shastras on both sides. There is evidently no dispositio the part of either contending party to go over to the othe to lay down arms. There is no further resource or reaso be ransacked or brought forward. Each side has decla at the top of its voice, that it is absolutely in the right its opponent is egregiously in the wrong. The danger risk, when matters have come to such a pass, are fo

to so drift as to place men of moderate unselfishness—such as characterises most men in most matters even in the cultured classes in a community—at a great discount. The perilous chances are to alienate and scare away probable converts and such as are passing, if I may say so, through the Chrysalis stage. Such men are too liable to be scandalised or deterred by the dilemma of either scoring for the honors of martyrdom involving a wholesale self-sacrifice and an ostracism from their kith and kin or of finding themselves denounced and pilloried as miserable specimens of unredeemed self-seeking and unmitigated poltroonery. When things threaten to arrive at such a predicament, it is prudent that both the zealous party and the party jealous of them must rise superior to the purely polemical function. Not only must they good-humouredly agree to disagree on the Shastraic issues, they must also take care not to lose touch of each other. They must shake hands and—apart from the contest on the direct issues debated between them—meet each other half-way; for, it is quite out of the question that the apostles of change should retire from the field, humbled and chagrined, or remain there, only to keep up a mock-fight to save appearances, all the while chafing inwardly under a sense of wasted energy or of unappreciated and thwarted labours. It is equally out of the question that the passive upholders of the *status quo*, who have had an easy time of it all along, should sit doggedly where they are and rouse themselves to action, only to repel attacks that might be delivered against them. In my opinion, neither can afford to stand where they are. If the former are pressing forward with a well-filled programme, the latter cannot help realising that the elements of disintegration have begun to shew themselves and that things are simply drifting without chart or compass. Both have thus active, counteracting duties which they must neither blink nor shirk—to be consistent with their respective faiths. May

they not revise their positions and their methods decide upon what amount of concession or recognition each might make or extend to the other, in a spirit of honesty, of calmness and of advance on right lines, and hit upon some harmonious action? Real success is barred or delayed by nothing so much as by the too common and too tempting practice of belittling the opponent's arguments and of denying him credit for an attitude dictated by good faith, however erroneously. It has been well said and it is well to bear in mind that "the faith of centuries is hard to root up and the old are only the last to make changes. The heart cleaves sometimes to a false doctrine rather than see the fabric, built up on the foundations of the past, totter and fall. If it is false, it will fall of its own weight and its votaries can neither save nor hinder." What is thus affirmed of long-standing faiths may be, with equal warrant and with equal force, affirmed of practices of ages—practices, which, by constant familiarity, have ceased to strike or startle as deformities or things which ought not to be. In combatting these and such as these, there is little use in bandying hard words or imputing discreditable motives. Nor will it be of any avail to trust to time and go to sleep, as if it would ameliorate or work wonders by mere efflux. That which bids fair is effort—put forth patiently but not petulently—*in the shape of a narrowing of the sphere of contention* by separating the essential and cardinal from the accidental and conventional in the points under debate so that the parties, arrayed against one another, might still continue in mutual touch and give rise to something of homogeneous action by suffering their angularities to be gradually rubbed off and by helping to create a substantial unity of purpose amid an apparent diversity of inclination and views in other respects.

To my mind, such a narrowing of the sphere

contention has long suggested itself, revealing a *modus vivendi* which seems to me to deserve greater prominence and sturdier insistence than hitherto and which is calculated to yield more fruit than has yet been harvested. It may well be that I am too sanguine. It may equally be that I am under a delusion. I am nevertheless unconvinced that the plan I venture to recommend has had its full and fair chance or that it should be laid on the shelf, on any *a priori* grounds, as a manifestly unserviceable hobby. The present, however, is not the first time I am stating it. Not long ago, while on a professional visit to Masulipatam, I allowed myself to be drawn into ventilating it in a speech, which suffered as I happened to deliver it extempore—lacking then the example of great masters, who, despite their high and acknowledged powers of elocution, uniformly and deliberately preferred, when they wished to avoid being mistaken by the outside world, the practice which has since been post-prandially chaffed (as I think) but classically stigmatised (as others fancy) as "Manuscript eloquence." But my then auditors seemed to have been favourably impressed with what I said, and my friends, Mr. N. N. Ghose and Mr. Surendranath Banerjea—even on the basis of the imperfect and, in some respects, an erroneous, account of my utterances—said a good word for the position I took—the former in the tersely written pages of his *Indian Nation* and the latter in one of his delightful feats in his special sphere, the public platform. These encourage me to re-state it in an unmistakable and amplifed form, with considerable additions which subsequent reading has brought within my reach as having a bearing.

Now, as regards early marriages. One of the grounds on which this system seems open to animadvertion is that it precludes the possibility of free, mutual choice on the part of the wedding couple. To my mind, such an objection seems to be extremely wide of the mark and one that should be

put on one side for the present and for a long time to come—for how long few can tell. I, for one, cannot hopefully look forward to a consummation in this respect in any near future. The conditions of the Hindu Society, in so far as social intermingling between the sexes is concerned, are dead against it. Even if it stood by itself, the single lesson of keenly-sensitive feminine chastity—taught to almost every one of our women by the fact that their adored Seetha of the Ramayana refused to be borne away from Lanka, the scene of present danger and possible death, even by Rama's immaculate and saintly devotee, Hanuman, on the ground of his sex—is far too deeply rooted in their sense of propriety and esteem to permit of what may be generically called courtship, which would seem to postulate the irreducible minimum that the blooming youths, contemplating matrimony, should not only be thrown into the company of each other but also be now and then left alone for mutual study and mutual understanding, without shyness and without the restraint caused by the presence of third parties. As a companion case or converse instance of *male* repugnance for a maiden who has been in the company of a stranger, one may cite the fate which befell the princess Amba, whose life is, so to speak, woven into the lives of Parasu Rama and Bhishma—heroes of whom even the least cultured Hindu knows and knows much. For who does not know that the maiden Amba was carried away with her sisters by the lunar hero, Bhishma, in order that his half-brothers might wed them—that on her disclosing to him her prior and plighted love for another, he let her go so that she might join the object of her affections—and that the latter rejected her by reason of her having remained, though for a brief period, in the custody of a stranger, even although that stranger was a sworn-celibate of the austerest type.

The whole tenor of the ideas and sentiments and of

the habits of thought and feeling, governing the conduct and moulding the relations of children towards parents among us, also militates against the speedy growth of the sort of individuality which the theory of mutual choice would presuppose. Equally adverse will be the deterring influence of the recorded accounts of daughters whom our women cherish as noble specimens of their sex and as the ideals their minds hover round or cling to, with all the glow of pride and keenness of pleasure. We read indeed of what is known as Swayamvara or the choice by the bride; but the best known instances, such as those of Seetha, Damayanthi, Draupadi and Rukmani, would, on examination, all be found to be not strictly in point as examples of selection, either independent of or in opposition to the paternal wish. Rigidly speaking, theirs were no Swayamvaras at all. On the contrary, they simply illustrate the several devices, adopted, not to override, but to give effect to the wishes of the father by securing, within reach, the presence of the bridegroom, rendered unattainable by one or other impeding cause. They are, if anything, examples of *concurrence* and not of antagonism as between fathers and daughters, and of no sort of paternal coercion as regards the male consort. Reference is indeed made and approval is also accorded to what is styled Gandharva form of marriage, in our law-books. But this is, not only plainly pointed at, all the same, as a sort of left-handed alliance, but is also restricted, in terms, to the ruling class, out of the same motive which extended the sacred name of wed- to Rakshasa and Paisacha forms—forms which Mr. J. Mayne has chosen to describe as the lusts of the Ourang tang, but which, along with the Gandharva, seem to me to rather resolvable into a reluctant concession to Might, en the latter showed a recurrent propensity to trample r Right. Further more, it is a fact worthy of note that, the few instances of Gandharva marriage which are

recorded to have taken place, the interviews between the pair were either stolen or accidental and unexpected, behind the back and without the sanction of parents or guardians. As to such a thing as honeymoon, it is wholely an unknown institution—the glamour and poetryof first promptings and gush of love being, as a rule, effectually checked by the occasions to meet and the latitude to mix being considerably reduced by the unavoidable presence of one or other of the members of a family group into which the young wife is transplanted amid environments calculated to make life prosaic and unsentimental and practical from the first—not to speak of the leaven of spiritual and spiritualising elements, introduced by our forefathers into the institution of marriage and still not altogether out of it.

Thus, it appears to me that the models of womanhood, valued among our women, would conspire with other causes to tell on the minds of our girls hostilely to a development in them of an inclination to choose their own husbands —models which must operate unless and until they are pulled down and smashed up, or until another Macaulay starts up to turn against our Ithihasas, Puranas and kindred writings his disastrous broadside of epigram and declamation without striving or caring to study their inner meaning—a luckily unlikely event in so far as the education of our fair sex is concerned. Another obstacle to the diminution or disappearance of paternal dominion is the widely-accepted belief that, on the paramount and well-known authority of Manu and of many other nent authors of Smrithis, marriage is in the n the earliest sacrament (Samscara) for girls, some like baptism for the Christian infant. It may be this is not *consciously* realised by our womanhood doctrine. But few that have noticed the sincere an vous anxieties of Hindu mothers to see their daug early enough, enter the holy precincts of married sta

I have had frequent occasion to do—quite apart from the desire to take advantage of eligible matches on worldly or prudential considerations—will hesitate to admit its secret, instinctive working as a powerful and efficient, though dormant, factor. Add to that belief, the almost mandatory declarations in Smrithis that the father is bound to see to his daughter becoming a wife before three seasons elapse after puberty, with spiritual rewards—to him, to her and to their forefathers—attached to the fulfilment of that duty and spiritual pains and penalties levelled against its default, such as the following:—

Parasara:—

अष्टवर्षाभवेत्तुगौरी नववर्षातुरोहिणी ।
दशवर्षाभवेत्तुकन्या अतऊर्ध्वंरजस्वला ॥

Ashtavarsha bhaveth gowree navavarshathu rohinee
Dasavarsha bhaveth kanya athaoorthwum rajaswala.

Meaning:—A girl is termed Gowree when eight years old, Rohinee when nine years old, Kanya when ten years old, and a Rajaswala thereafter.

Brihaspathi:—

गौरींददन्नाकपृष्टं वैकुण्ठंरोहिणींददन् ।
कन्यांददन्ब्रह्मलोकं रौरवंतुरजस्वलाम् ॥

Gowreem dadannakaprushtam vykunthum rohineem dadan
Kanyam dadun brahmalokum rauravumthu rajaswalam.

Meaning:—The gift of a Gowree secures the celestial region Naka; the gift of a Rohinee secures the heaven Vykuntha; the gift of a Kanya secures the regions of Brahma; while the gift of a Rajaswala entails an abode in hell.

Parasara:—

माताचैवपिताचैव ज्येष्ठभ्रातातथैवच ।
त्रयस्तेनरकंयान्ति दृष्ट्वाकन्यांरजस्वलाम् ॥

Matha chaiva pitha chaiva jyeshthabratha thathaivacha
Thrayasthe narakum yanthi drushtva kanyam rajasvalam.

Meaning:—The father, the mother and the eldest brother, all the three go to hell by allowing a girl's puberty to supervene before marriage.

These seem, by the way, to give us an inkling into one of the powerful grounds which accelerate marriages among us long before the girls might arrive at the age to judge for themselves. All this has to be pulled up, root and branch, and cast away before the right of independent choice becomes approvingly exercisable. I am afraid, besides, that, owing to these several causes which I have glanced at, it will be as difficult for our girls to take to the foreign institutions of courtship, honeymoon and all the rest of it as it would be for their western sisters to forego them or to develop in themselves a penchant for a polyandrous life which every right-thinking person justly abominates. In the meantime, men would not be wanting who, deriving their ideas from the pages of the every-day novels of the west, would take alarm, shake their heads ominously and mutter and reiterate the wish that flirtations, Gretna Green alliances and runaway matches, which rise as bubbles and wavelets on the rushing floods of fresh ideas, might never disturb the even tenor of the matrimonial stream in their midst. Let us put it seriously to ourselves whether we consider *this* feasible within a measurable distance of time. To my mind, there is, in all I have said, a cumulative argument against the expediency of retaining the objection in question on the card. To enunciate our position so as to ward off such an alarm and keep down such a wish is a manifest duty, in order to give the explicit and public assurance that we mean practical and practicable improvement and not merely a novelty and an innovation to which that character may or may not belong.

In maintaining this position, I by no means countenance the baneful practice of *child* marriages which seem to spread fast in defiance of the thunders against them. The most cogent objection to that practice is that thereby we are rearing up—unconsciously but inevitably nevertheless—a baby-born nation, as Dr. Smythe—now in Mysore service and one whom I have known for a considerable time and learned to respect ever since I began to know him—had the courage and candour to assert openly at a public meeting in Madras to the chagrin of many who do not relish unpalatable truths. I too was among those who were pained by the statement; but it was for the reason that we have been unwittingly working out such disastrous results. I would press this objection with all the vehemence of feeling and the strength of language I can command. I am not indeed unalive to the motives which mostly—and I would add, venially—lead to such marriages; and I must beg to differ from those who, on that account, condemn the parents and guardians outright and in unmeasured terms and deal out to those parents and guardians hard epithets. Neither by the employment of pungent adjectives nor by other efforts of rhetoric could we undo or replace their legal rights.

To work a sure, steady and progressive change in this respect, effort must be made, iterated and re-iterated to bring startlingly home to parents, uneducated in English, how physical deterioration, in virtue of Nature's unerring forces and stern, physiological laws, will grow more and more far-reaching and claim ever-increasing victims, dilapidated and stunted, as one generation succeeds another. I vividly remember how, so long back as five and forty years ago, my good and respected father ever had on his lips the moral that कुलहीन (Kulaheena) *i.e.*, lowness of extraction is more endurable than बलहीन (Balaheena) i.e., lowness of

physical strength, in the choice of husbands for our girls. He both preached and saw it practised within the lamentably short span of life, vouchsafed to him.

That which lends color to attacks such as I have alluded to is that, in a few cases, girls are bartered for filthy lucre—though, even this heartless procedure of turning maidens into so many gold mines has a silver lining about it, in so far as it induces the disposers of them to postpone marriage to the nearest limits of puberty in order to command an abnormally high price for them. Barring the few cases which lack this latter feature and barring also *all* the abominable cases in which girls in naive twelve are yoked to decrepit age with one foot in the grave, an unbiassed observation cannot help recognising that prudential considerations for the girl's welfare, which is taken to comprehend her enduring, though not poetic, happiness, coupled with a nervous anxiety to see girls well-settled in life, underlie the practice.

In making Sir Joseph Graybrooke in "Miss or Mrs." to tell his daughter "My dear Child! that is a matter of experience; love will come when you are married", and in representing her aunt Miss Lavinia as adding "Dear Natalie, if you remembered your poor mother as I remember her, you would know that your father's experience is to be relied on," Wilkie Collins may be said to be unconsciously hitting off what most Hindu fathers say to themselves in selecting, for their dear ones, husbands, not only agreeable but also capable of keeping them in comfort—with this difference, however, that the bridegrooms of their choice very seldom turn out such scoundrels as Richard Turlington. Further, there was quite as much practical truth as retort in the reply that the Hindus learned to love whom they married—a reply which is said to have been given by the late Mr. T. Gopal Row, the foremost of the most sober-minded, clear-sighted, and

universally-esteemed products of the Madras University, to a European friend who twitted him on his countrymen not marrying whom they love.

Eligible matches are, further, not always ready at hand within the limits of the period of puberty—the Rubicon that should not be crossed. There is therefore an eagerness—not altogether unpardonable—to take time by the forelock and to bring about the tying of the indissoluble knot where there is an over-supply of girls to cope with. This eagerness sometimes overshoots the mark by degenerating into absolute baby marriages. But such a result is an abuse and is unquestionably regrettable; but then it is, in the nature of things, *not* altogether preventible, any more than fortune-hunting, title-hunting and other kinds of unequal and unrelished matches elsewhere are. I say this notwithstanding the impotent and easily-evaded make-believe of legislation by the Mysore Durbar. To most parents, thus limited to the period of puberty for exercising their right or rather for performing their duty, the differences in age between 5 or 6 on the one hand and 11 or 12 on the other would unfortunately convey little appreciable meaning.

The narrowing therefore of the sphere of contest in respect of early marriages seems to lie in one or other of two things, without abstracting paternal rights, without denying to fathers the credit of caring for the welfare of their children and without seeking or striving to invest our boys and girls with an unchecked privilege of choosing their partners in life. Those two things are (1) that our Brahmins should imitate the Namburis in the Malabar Districts who disregard the limit of puberty and with whom, accepted as good *vipras* (Bramins) as themselves, they intermix and interdine as I am told, (2) that accepting that the rule to marry before puberty is insuperable and that a marriage attains finality on the completion of the Saptapadi—a stage in the series of conjugal rites—

we should *systematically and rigidly postpone consummation which we can do with perfect impunity, for some years after puberty, i.e., for as many years as would insure against the physical deterioration,* enlarged upon by Dr. Smythe as already alluded to. *This, in my opinion, is one perfectly practicable modus vivendi* for which we may hopefully and profitably agitate. Strictly speaking, the Brahmin alone has to make up his mind in this respect, in our Presidency; for the text which threatens degradation in case of marriage after that limit is this:—

Parasara:

यस्तांसमुद्वहेत्कन्यां ब्राह्मणोमदमोहितः ।
असंभाष्योह्यपाङ्क्तेयस्सविप्रोवृषलीपतिः ॥

Yastham samudwahét kanyam brahmano madamohitah
Asumbhashyo hyapanktheyassavipro vrishaleepathih.

Meaning:—That Brahmin who, blinded by passion, marries such a girl (Rajaswala) is unfit to mix with or eat with—such a one is called Vrishaleepathy.

I am aware that, notwithstanding the fact of Kshetriyas, the caste above them, not respecting any such limit, the Komaties, who claim to represent in this Presidency the third of the four recognised Hindu castes, as also all castes in Bengal and elsewhere, equally rigidly observe this rule and that many, even among the classes who do not consider themselves bound by such a rule, do, in practice, behave often as if it was obligatory on them. It goes without saying that the task to shake themselves out of such a practice is, on that account, more easy for them. If they would not go this length, which they have an unqualified liberty to do, may I not point out to them that, even with their self-imposed restraints, there is nothing to handicap them, if they resolve to assimilate themselves to the bulk of the non-Brahmin Hindus, so far as to defer consummation, as I have just suggested to the Brahmin to do. To inaugu-

rate this departure, little more than a convention or compact among the leaders in each interdining set or class to stand by one another or rather to sit and mess by the side of one another is needed; and it were to be devoutly wished that no considerable part of these sets and classes would hesitate or lose further time to join hands in this respect. Mere mob-help or the co-operation of illiterate relations will never do. That will be like a wave of caprice. It may ebb and recede as fast as it may flow and advance. It may oftener do harm than good, being invariably led by private and personal regards rather than by public and impersonal or altruistic considerations. It is too fickle, too weakly-grounded, and too unsubstantial to be depended upon. If men, keen about the amelioration in question, yet see reason to fight shy of my proposal, there is another on the question of commensality, which offers a solution—commensality happening to be, rightly or wrongly (wrongly as *I* think) the pivot on which all reform is made to turn. It applies to this and many others which I shall deal with in this paper. I may therefore once for all formulate and dwell upon it in this connection, so that I may simply refer to it, by and by, as occasion may arise to quote it as a solution.

Of commensality, there are two views to take. But, before noticing these views, let us see what the essence of the objection is. It is little more and little less than this:—that food, which is unexceptionable on any ground of its inherent properties, becomes contaminated by being taken in company with one who has sinned against a Shastraic rule. On the very face of it, the objection is no higher than a conventional one; for it would be ridiculous to hold that an article of consumption, acceptable in all other respects becomes metamorphosed into something intrinsically deleterious by reason of the mere touch, look or proximity of a person, obnoxious as above noted. Taking it then as

a conventional canon, the next question is who is to use it and for what purpose. As I have said, there are two views to take. The view generally entertained about it is that it is a privilege with which society is armed and which is granted or withheld by society as such, in proof of its condonation or condemnation of a person who incurs its displeasure by offending against one or other of the rules, the observance of which it has the prerogative to enforce. To my mind, this is a grievous mistake, as, on a comprehension of the true scope of our Shastras, the society is nowhere constituted into a tribunal with an inherent jurisdiction to exercise any collective power of pronouncing outlawry, as I shall soon endeavour to shew. In the meantime, let us assume it to be correct and see what honest way is open to us to overcome the barrier thus interposed. To look upon it as *the one* arbitrarily-devised mode of signifying the pleasure or displeasure of Society, would be a palpable error. On the contrary, it is, at best, *only one out of the few signs and tokens* by which aloofness from unclean persons—unclean in the eye of the Sastras, in a certain sense and for a certain purpose—is secured. I say advisedly that commensality is only one of the signs and tokens; for, there were others which exemplified a greater rigour of avoidance in times gone by, but which have silently dropped into disuetude and become obsolete. The following verses are in point:—

Parasara :—

त्यजेद्देशं कृतयुगे त्रेतायां ग्राममुत्सृजेत् ।
द्वापरे कुलमेकंतु कर्तारंतु कलौ युगे ॥

Thyajetthesum krithayuge threthayam gramamuthsrueth
Dwapare kulumekumthu kartharam thu kalau yuge.

Meaning: Avoid the country in Kritha Yuga, the village in Tretha Yuga, the family in Dwapara and the sinner alone in Kali Yuga.

कृते संभाषणादेव त्रेतायां स्पर्शनेन च।
द्वापरेत्वन्नमादाय कलौ पतति कर्मणा ॥

Krithe sambhashanatheva threthayam sparsanenacha
Dwapare thwannumadaya kalau pathathi karmana.

Meaning: One becomes a sinner in Kritha Yuga by merely speaking (to the sinner), in Tretha Yuga by touching (him), in Dwapara Yuga by partaking of food (from him and in Kali Yuga by committing sinful acts.

Note.—As Madhavacharya and others have explained, the substance of the above verses may be put thus:—

(1) Whereas in Kritha, Tretha and Dwapara Yugas, one becomes a sinner by merely talking to, touching and eating the food of, a sinner, in Kali Yuga, one becomes a sinner only by committing acts of sin.

(2) Whereas in Kritha Yuga the whole kingdom (wherein the sinner resides), in Tretha the whole village (where the sinner lives), in Dwapara the whole family (to which he belongs) must be shunned (to escape taint), in Kali Yuga we have only to shun the actual sinner.

This is not all. Even the rules which relate to the question of permissible food are demonstrably in the obsolescent stage—a circumstance which must be evident to the least observant, when he notes how, out of the interdicted edibles and drinkables, onions, potatoes and other articles of consumption among the solids and aerated waters among liquids, though bottled by hands, whose touch is proscribed for the Kali Yuga, are—to instance a few out of many—freely used by many who were once squeamish about them. Surely the liberty, thus enjoyed as to *things* regarded as *intrinsically* objectionable may, with a safe conscience or rather without any subterfuge or charge of evasion, take the further form of eating by the side of a person, who, if I may say so, is only metaphorically tainted. In these circumstances, it will be a clear narrowing of the

sphere of contention, if the prohibition as to interdining goes the way that its companion-prohibitions have gone, with the single exception of intermarriage which, by the way, involves many other, complex and personal considerations, than that the youth concerned is open to exception, in the light of what Shastras counsel—though even in this excepted sphere of action, I can cite a number of instances showing that considerable latitude and laxity have set in and are unconditionally assented to, which are diametrically opposed to the Shastraic utterances in that behalf. Let then the sets which now interdine unite, covenant, and practically bring into vogue this narrowing of the sphere of contention; for, what a convention may make, it can well unmake.

Such a task may receive an impetus, without any reasonable fear of doing wrong, if the second and the other view of commensality, which I shall proceed to propound as the more accurate one, commands acceptance. Paradoxical as it may sound to many, it is a fact—quite capable of proof—that rights of individuality are nowhere so fully vouchsafed or so thoroughly acknowledged as in the Shastras as I read them—it being left to each man to work out or to wreck his salvation and his temporal well-being, of which the former is particularly set forth as the ruling end and aim of all earthly existence and which he is reminded of, in connection with almost every event or incident of life—great and small. The Shastras give him the rules, give him the chance and give him the advice to qualify for and strive towards that goal; but, at the same time, it leaves him the option to utilise them according to his pleasure and to the best of his power, except in one particular which will be presently noticed. They do no more and they profess to do no more. The following texts bear me out in this construction :

Apasthamba Sutras :—

सर्ववर्णानां स्वधर्मानुष्ठाने परमपरिमितं सुखं ततः परिवृत्तौ कर्म-फलशेषेण जातिं रूपं वर्णं बलं मेधां प्रज्ञां द्रव्याणि धर्मानुष्ठानमिति प्रतिपद्यते· तच्चक्रवदुभयोर्लोकयोस्सुख एववर्तते ॥

Sarvavarnanam swatharmanushtane paramaparimithum sukhum thathah parivrithow karmaphalaseshena jathim roopum varnam balum medham pragnam dravyani dharmanushthanamithi prathipadyathe thachchakravathubhayor lokayos sukha yeva varthathe.

Meaning: By acting up to the rules prescribed for the several Varnas (castes) and Asramas (orders), not only does eternal happiness await a person in the next world, but he also secures in this world on re-birth such good fruits as good lineage, good looks, good caste, good physique, good intellect, wealth, &c.

Manu :—

आचाराल्लभ्यतेह्यायु राचारादीप्सिताःप्रजाः ।
आचाराद्धनमक्षय्यं आचारोहन्त्यलक्षणम् ॥

Acharallabhyathe hyayuracharatheepsithah prajah
Acharaddhanamakshayyam Acharohyathyalakshanam.

Meaning: By Achara (conduct according to Shastraic rules) is attained long life, good progeny, endless wealth, &c.

दुराचारोहिपुरुषो लोकेभवतिनिन्दितः ।
दुःखभागीचसततं व्याधितोल्पायुरेवच ॥

Duracharohi purusho loke bhavathi ninditháh
Duhkhabhageecha sathathum vyadhitholpayurevacha.

Meaning :—By improper conduct, a person becomes in this world odious, unhappy, sickly and short-lived.

Kanwa :—

आसनाच्छयनाद्दानात् सल्लापात्सहभोजनात् ।
संक्रमन्तीहपापानि तैलबिन्दुरिवाम्भसि ॥

Asanachchayanaddanath sallapath sahabhojanath
Sankramantheeha papani thylabindurivambhasi.

Meaning: By sitting with him (the sinner), by sleeping by his side, by making gifts to him, by talking to him, by eating with him, sins spread themselves like drops of oil on water.

Brihaspathi:—

एकशय्यासनंपङ्क्तिभाण्ड पङ्क्त्यन्नमिश्रणम् ।
याजनाध्यापनेयोनि स्तथाचसहभोजनम् ॥
नवधासंकरःप्रोक्तो नकर्तव्योधर्मैस्सह ॥

Yekasayyasanam punkthybhandam pankthyannamisranam.
Yajanadhyapaneyonisthadhacha saha bhojanam
Navadha sunkarah proktho na karthavyodhamyssaha.

Meaning: Sleeping on the same bed, sitting on the same seat, partaking of food from the same vessel, eating in a line at a general repast, helping in the performance of religious rites, giving lessons in Vedas, and interdining —in these nine respects, you should avoid contact with a sinner.

Devala:—

सल्लापस्पर्शनिश्वासात् सहशय्यासनाशनात् ।
याजनाध्यापनाद्यौनात् पापसंक्रमतेनृणाम् ॥

Sallapasparsanisvasath saha sayyasanasanath
Yajanadhyapanadyaunath papamsunkramathe nrunam.

Meaning: Speaking with a sinner, touching him, being within reach of his breath, sharing in the same bed, sharing in the same seat, interdining with him, helping him in the performance of religious rites, giving him lessons in the Vedas, intermarrying with him, are ways of contracting sin

In the Brahmin preceptor Sukra Chariar sanctioning the marriage of his daughter with the Kshetria monarch

Yayathi who demurred to take the step on the ground that it inverted the Shastraic order—in the sage Vyasa authorising Drowpadi to wed the five Pandavas, notwithstanding that polyandry was forbidden—in the holy Vasishta taking for consort an unhallowed Chandali—and in the Brahmin Pandit Pandita Rat uniting himself to the Mahomedan princess Lavangi and throwing down the gauntlet for those who contended that he thereby outraged Hindu faith—in these and similar acts of seeming defiance of the Shastras, we recognise an unequivocal declaration of independence as though the sway of Smrithis were, strictly speaking, optional. It would, in my judgment, not be a tenable argument to say of these and the like that they were the deeds of towering personalities who rose superior to the petty little rules, meant for the common herd, just as a giant would pass through a gossamer network of cobwebs spun by the most skilful of spiders; for, law is no respecter of persons, be their mental and moral altitude however exalted; and an obligation is an obligation all the same, on all. Nor do I think that the text which tells us to do as great men *bid* and *not* as they *do*, affords any explanation; for it looks to me rather to be but the later outcome of a policy to discourage isolated instances of defiance of Shastras, whimsically and in a spirit of levity.

It is perhaps in recognition of this aspect of the Shastras that an eminent Shastraic expounder, whose name or treatise I cannot just now recall or lay my hands on, enunciated the thesis that they discharge a threefold function, *i.e.*, they are in part प्रभुसम्मिति* (sovereign-like), in part मित्रसम्मिति† (friend-like) and in part कान्तासम्मिति‡ a winsome damsel-like), the plain English of which classification is that they are partly authoritative, partly advisory,

* Prabhusammithi. † Mithrasammithi. ‡ Kanthasammithi.

and partly persuasive. They are obviously authoritative of course where they convey dictates to emblems of temporal power, how to settle reciprocal rights among the members of a family, how to decide the rights of the family as against an outcaste, whose fall entails his extinction in it, how to adjudicate upon and decide disputes between man and man and how to punish crimes and misdemeanours. Beyond these limits, which might be compendiously designated as defining the domain of civil rights, the Shastras seem to me to fall under one or other of the remaining two heads. Even where they sound authoritative in these other matters, they will be found, on examination, to be but canons which one ought to conform to, at the peril to one's spiritual welfare and at the risk of one being shunned—not by the rank and file, and much less by the tag-rag and bob-tail, of one's caste, sect or creed —but by pious men—called साधवः* शिष्टाः,† and so forth in the Smrithis—who strive to live the life, such as is mapped out and held out as beautiful by the Aryan faith to each of its adherents. A man's salvation of his soul and the advancement of his temporal interests are indisputably his own concern ; and I believe that it will be conceded on all hands that no other man—much less any collection of men—has any right to coerce him or punish him in these respects. Even on the momentous affair of preparing himself here for the hereafter, the Shastras appear to me to be but like a friend, मित्रसम्मिति‡ and no more. Whether I am correct or incorrect on this point, it is, I think, abundantly clear that, in all other matters he is a thorough free-agent to make or mar himself. From such a right in one man, it is but a corrollary that every other man has an identical right to do as he pleases. It follows then that if truly pious men—Sadhavah(साधवः)and

* Sadhavah. † Sishtah. ‡ Mithrammithi.

Sisthah शिष्टाः of the Smrithis—see fit to avoid a delinquent, they do so in self-defence, *i.e.*, compelled by an honest desire to safeguard themselves against what they regard as contamination, imperilling their best interests. The dullest man must note the broad and marked distinction that exists and is discernible between this conduct and the so-called ostracism of the present day by a pack of ignorant or spiteful persons, not often one-tenth as good as the one they persecute, taken all in all. Their pretensions are entirely without warrant and without foundation.

Parasara :—

चत्वारोवा त्रयो वापि य ब्रूवैयुद्पारगाः ।
सधर्म इतिविज्ञेयो नेतरैस्तु सहस्रशः ॥

Chathwarova thrayo vapi yam brooyurvedaparagah
Sadharma ithivigneyoh netharysthu sahasrasah.

Meaning: That which four or three persons well versed in the vedas declare is to be viewed as law—not anything else although declared even by a thousand.

अतऊर्ध्वंतु येविप्राः केवलं नामधारकाः ।
परिषत्वं न तेष्वस्ति सहस्रगुणितेष्वापि ॥

Atha oorthwam thu ye viprah kevalam namadharakah
Parishattwam na theshwasthi sahasragunitheshwape.

Meaning: Henceforth, nominal Brahmins, even although they count by thousands, shall not possess the character of a Parishad (an assembly for solving Dharma).

यथाकाष्टमयोहस्ती यथाचर्ममयोमृगः ।
ब्राह्मणस्त्वनधीयानस्त्रयस्ते नामधारकाः ॥

Yatha kashtamayo hasthee yatha charmamayo mrigah,
Brahmanasthwanadheeyanasthrayasthe namadharakah.

Meaning: Just as is an elephant made of wood and just as is an animal (deer) formed out of skin, so are nominal Brahmins uninitiated (in the Vedas).

प्रायश्चित्त प्रयच्छन्ति येद्विजाः नामधारकाः ।
तेद्विजाः पापकर्माणस्समेता नरकं ययुः ॥

Prayaschitham prayachanthi ye dwijah namadharakah.
Tha dwijah papakarmanassmetha narakam yayuh.

Meaning: Whenever nominal Brahmnis prescribe penance, they thereby become sinners and they are doomed to Hell.

It may not be out of place here to explain the only trace of an organisation which the Shastras countenance, *viz.*, a Parishat, as it is technically termed. To begin with, it has no inherent power to call itself into being. It is the outcome—the sheer outcome—of the man who considers himself a sinner and who wishes to regain his lost position, out of qualms of conscience and out of a desire to resume the duties and the course of life, prescribed to every Aryan.

Parasara :—

वेदवेदाङ्गविदुषाम् धर्मशास्त्रंविजानताम् ।
स्वधर्मरतविप्राणां स्वकंपापंनिवेदयेत् ॥

Vedavedangavidusham dharmasasthram vijanatham
Swadharmarathavipranam swakum papum nivedayeth.

Meaning: A sinner should confess his sin to Brahmins versed in the Vedas and the Vedangas, acquainted with the principles of the Dharma Sastras, and devoted to the rules of life prescribed for them.

Parasara :—

अव्रतानाममन्त्राणां जातिमात्रोपजीविनाम् ।
सहस्रशस्समेतानां परिषत्वंनविद्यते ॥

Avrathanamamanthranam jathimathropajeevinam
Sahasrasassamethanam parishathwam navidyathe.

Meaning: Those that do not live up to the rules of their order, those who have not been duly initiated, those that live nominally according to their caste, are unfit for

the function of a parishat, even although they muster by thousands.

अज्ञात्वाधर्मशास्त्राणि प्रायश्चित्तंददातियः ।
प्रायश्चित्तीभवेत्पूतः किल्बिषंपरिषद्व्रजेत् ॥

Agnathwa dharmasasthrani prayaschittham dadathyyah
Prayaschithee bhaveth poothah kilbishum parishadvrajeth.

Meaning: Even although the penance is prescribed by a man ignorant of the Dharma Shastras, the penitent becomes purified, though the sin attaches thereby to the person that so prescribes.

Note: The significance of this verse lies in the prominence it has given to the penitent's attitude.

Be it noted—and this cannot be too emphatically pointed out—that it is the penitent sinner and none else who can convene a Parishat and that it is from his voluntary submission and from no other source is its power derived. In this respect, though in this respect alone, a Parishat is like arbitrators, whose jurisdiction to adjudicate is conferred by the parties to a dispute, by the exercise of their volition and by that alone. But, unlike arbitrators, the Parishat has no disputes to set at rest and no blame to apportion or to lay on this or that of the contending parties, each of whom claims approbation of verdict as against the other. The Parishat, on the contrary, has as his premiss that he who convenes it confesses himself to be in the wrong and only seeks that the fitting atonement for that wrong may be indicated to him. It is, I think, self-evident that a machinery, thus constituted, and constituted for such a purpose can have no power to penalise or chastise; and, save and except this machinery, no other is contemplated or warranted by the Shastras.

In these circumstances, the power to excommunicate or ---ounce verdicts of guilt or innocence, claimed by or for ꞏeads of *mutts* and the leaders of the several sects is a

downright usurpation, originating in ignorant surrender on the part of those over whom they exercise control. Such a surrender and such a tyranny do but afford an illustration of the sage saying that the slave makes the tyrant and not *vice versâ*.

It may be asked how has it come about, that caste-meetings are held and the power of *mutts* and of similar pretenders to authority is invoked to bring breakers of caste-rules to book. I am inclined to think—and it may be a mere speculation on my part, though I trust a speculation not altogether without the semblance of warrant—that the higher castes—ignorant of their privileges—have servilely, though insensibly, imitated the non-dvija population, which, for want of other recognised guides, has long been in the habit of electing its headmen and convoking caste-assemblies—called जातिकूटम् (Jathi cootam)—to adjudicate on the thousand and one disputes which arise among them, not on caste questions only but also on many others, foreign to them.

On the important ground that thereby we shall avoid outraging but shall, on the contrary, nourish, foster and conserve feelings of self-respect and discourage the growth or spread of dissimulation, I lay superlative stress on this method of getting rid of the existing embargo on commensality, and every right-minded man must decidedly prefer it to the prevalent plan of requisitioning the moonshine of an expiation. The origin and motive of all penance is primarily penitence, without which all acts of atonement are a hollow pretence, if not also an impudent mockery. Now, let us put it to ourselves whether we are so blind as not to know that nine men out of ten, who consent to go through the formality of pureficatory rites are really pr[illegible] of the conduct for which they profess to subject them[illegible] to those rites and whether they are not laughing in

sleeves at the folly, the simplicity and the easily-gratified formalism of those who ask to be thus deliberately cajoled or imposed upon. The degradation of the soul and the lowering of character involved in an affectation of repentance or in conduct implying repentance when none is really felt or when there is an inward chuckling over the success of an undisguised *ruse* are too much of a price to pay for what is literally selling one's soul for a mess of pottage. The threatened demoralisation and callousness to moral sensibilities, consequent on this sort of diplomatic stooping to conquer, must make us strike a halt betimes, *i.e.*, before we become largely committed to lives of plausible falsehoods and to a course of pious frauds. Let us be done with the policy of hood-winking the unwary lest we end with hood-winking ourselves and vitiating our moral susceptibilities. It rests, not on individual effort, but on the leaders of inter-dining classes who have it in their power to unite in solidarity as I have humbly recommended and to make it no longer necessary for honorable men to debase themselves and go through a feint—excepting always that pious men who, in good faith, regard the innovator as tainted and tainting, shall be free to stand aloof. I know that life is a series of compromises. What I recommend is also a compromise, which will possess all the merits of a compromise without the demerit of compromising those who accept it or acquiesce in it.

Next, as to re-marriage of our widows. Here again, there is room for narrowing the sphere of contention. Despite all that is asserted to the contrary—on the meaning of divers words and on the interpretation of divers texts—the single fact that there is a distinct and recognised status conceded (1) to the Punarbhu, a twice-married woman, as distinguished from "Swairini" (adulteress) and "vidhava" (widow) and (2) to Pownarbhava, son of a twice-married woman marking him off from a "Kunda", bastard son

born of a married woman and "Golaka" bastard son begotton on a widow, would seem fairly to establish beyond all cavil, that re-marriages of women were in vogue for all practical purposes of life at one period in the history of our people. The sole question therefore is how to revive it and what prevents the revival. That the Pownarbhavas were declared unsuitable for consecration at Shraddhas need not trouble us; for so were also many of legitimate extraction, on the ground of ignorance of the Vedas and on other grounds, which—be it said by the way—did not then and do not now in the least disqualify them for commensality on all *ordinary* occasions. We should, I suppose, be quite content—at least as an initial expedient—to see the children of re-married women lifted above proscription and assigned just the status and privileges which Namadhraka Brahmins and like Hindus now occupy and enjoy. Now, the prohibition against the recognition of the practice in the present day rests on a text of Smrithi-writer Kratu and on a list of things forbidden for the present Kali Yuga, *i.e.*, the Yuga in which we live—a list drawn up, it is said, in the beginning of our Yuga by a conclave of unnamed sages, for whom authority is claimed on a Sutra of Apasthambha.

धर्मज्ञसमयः प्रमाणंवेदाश्च ॥

Dharmajnasamayah pramanam Vedascha.

Meaning: The verdicts of men versed in Dharma are as authoritative as the Vedas.

That list I do not reproduce here as it is ready to hand in nearly all the Nibandhana Grandhas or treatises, in print.

To the prohibition thus laid down, it is bad logic to deny a binding force (as is often done) on the principle enunciated in the following verse.

Sangraha :—

श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणेषु विरुद्धेषुपरस्परम् ।
पूर्वपूर्वंबलीयस्स्यादितिन्यायविदोविदुः ॥

Sruthismrithi puraneshu viruddheshu parasparam
Poorvampoorvam baleeyassyathithi nyayavido viduh.

Meaning: Learned men have said that where there is a contradiction among Sruthi, Smrithi and Purana, each foregoing one is stronger than what follows.

I say it is bad logic, principally because it is a fallacy to talk of a contradiction between propositions which are correlated as a general rule and as an exception grafted on that rule for a specific period as in this instance; for an exception must axiomatically place limitations on the rule and must, to that extent, override it. A contrary supposition must be palpably absurd as getting rid of all possibility of laying down exceptions, besides convicting our voluminous Smrithi and Puranic writers of having been so many purposeless and laborious triflers. I would therefore unconditionally accept the authority of the exception and seek a clue to an honest way out of it, just as the father of Vikramarka must have found to marry wives from castes below his and just as Sri Sankara, Sri Ramanuja and other universally-respected personages must have discovered for entering the order of Sanyasins—in the face of the fact that the course they respectively pursued was inhibited in the same identical list. Is there then any analogous, justifying course available to the reformer of the present day? It has long struck me that in all cases in which there is a widespread repugnance for anything laid down in the Smrithics there is, on the unequivocal authority of an eminent Smrithi itself, which will be presently cited, a perfect right or rather a manifest duty to over-ride it. The text which allows or prescribes this course might well be relied on as our sheet-anchor, provided we feel sure

that the condition precedent, *viz.*, of a general antipathy, (लोकविद्विष्टम्)* does in fact exist—a condition precedent which is indispensable to safeguard majorities from being bored by the tyranny of minorities. I assume that, in respect of interdicting our women from re-marrying, there is such a general antipathy and I point to the text whose authenticity, authority and applicability to cases such as the present have been placed beyond doubt by interpretation and illustration by many recognised writers, notably by the widely-esteemed author of the Mitakshara. The text runs thus :—

Yagnavalkya :—

अस्वर्ग्यं लोकविद्विष्टं धर्ममप्याचरेन्नतु ॥

Aswargyam lokavidwishtum dharmamapyacherennathu.

Meaning: One should cease to do that act which is calculated to bar entrance into heaven or is generally felt to be repugnant notwithstanding it may be laid down as Dharma.

In three different contexts and for three different purposes, the author of Mitacshara has cited and applied this text so far as I am aware, *viz* :—

(1) In deciding that shares of sons are equal at partition contrary to Manu's declaration that a larger share shall go to the eldest son.

(2) In setting aside a certain rule as to pollution which it is needless to enunciate here.

(3) And in giving his approval to the non-observance of certain prescribed rites of ancient dates.

In bringing the rule against the remarriage of our widows within the purview of the text in question, there ought further to be the utmost readiness, as already a good part of the rule has been an actual dead-letter for ages

* Lokavidvishtam.

past; for, though, on the texts of Kasyapa and Bodhayana, which I subjoin, there were seven classes of Punarbhus, nearly half the number have been clean outside the ban for hundreds of years, if they ever were under it.

Kasyapa :—

सप्तपौनर्भवाः कन्याः वर्जनीयाः कुलाधमाः ।
वाचादत्ता मनोदत्ता कृतकौतुकमंगला ।
उदकस्पर्शितायाच याचपाणिगृहीतिका ।
अग्निं परिगतायाच पुनर्भूःप्रसवाचया ॥

Saptha paunarbhavah kanyah varjaneeyah kuladhamah
Vachadatta manodatta krithakowthukamangala
Udakasparsitha yacha yacha panigriheethika
Agnim parigatha yacha punarbhooh prasavachaya.

Meaning :—Punurbhava girls are of seven classes, and being base ought to be shunned (in marriage), *viz.*, verbally-given, mentally-given, one who has had the matrimonial wrist-thread put on, one given with the pouring of water, one accepted by the hand by the bridegroom, one who has gone round the bridal fire (one who has passed the Saptapadi) and one who is born of a punarbhu.

Bodhayanah Sutra :—

वाग्दत्तामनोदत्ताग्निं परिगता सप्तमं पदं ।
निहिता भुक्ता गृहीतगर्भा प्रसूताचेति सप्तविधा ।
पुनर्भूः तां गृहीत्वा न प्रजां नधर्मं विन्देत् ॥

Vagdattah manodattagnim parigatha saptamampadam
Nihita bhuktah griheethagarbah prasootha chethi sapthavidhah
Punarbhooh tham griheethwa na prajam na dharmam vindeth.

Meaning :—Verbally-given, mentally-given, one who has gone round the bridal fire, one who has completed

the Saptapadi ceremony, one who has sexully known man, one who has conceived, one who has borne children. These are the seven classes of Punarbhu. By marrying them, neither lawful progeny nor Dharma would result.

There are indeed some, who—deeply impressed with the fact that many a widow actually fulfills, in Hindu families, the benevolent and noble function of the "Maiden-aunt" and of a guardian angel of young couples who set up separate homes of their own—might entertain the selfish fear that those humane classes might dwindle in numbers if not into nothing, in case widows were given the chance to marry again. To take away motives or facilities for the development and multiplicity of such angelic characters might indeed be a general misfortune, though to be governed by such a consideration, would be to put the happiness of others before the happiness of the widows themselves; no body—either of legislators or of ordinary men—has the shadow of a right to insist on such a slavery or to stem the tide, if it should swell, surge and advance. But, in my humble judgment, no such tremendous result would follow. Except where tenderness of age supplies the motive power, and except when the sweets of married life were utterly untasted, the gloomy vaticinations in question are unlikely to be verified in results. Our national temperament is against it. Throw open the portals, and you will nevertheless find that few and far between—except in respect of the above excepted exceptions—will be the instances of advantage being taken of the new liberty. Do we not know that a great many of the men among us, who are entitled to take fresh wives in supersession of or in succession to prior wives, are averse to do it? Do we not know also that, even among the nations, amongst whom widowhood is no badge of unfitness for matrimony, there are heaps of women who do not care to enter upon a conjugal life, after losing the objects of their first choice? The passions of the flesh do

not always overmaster the pleasures of an intellectual kind where the resources for the latter have been fairly developed, while the joy of playing the angel of unselfish goodness is keener than the relish for carnal gratification. If, therefore, there are among us any number of male persuasion, who are oppressed by the fear in question, they may rest assured that their interests would remain best protected, notwithstanding all that men and women, legislators and reformers, might do tending to the contrary.

Thus then there is an honest mode of reviving a practice once prevalent, and no one need be under any apprehension of incurring sin ; for, whatever act was once consonant with loyalty to Hindu faith, must—other things being equal—be no less consonant with it in the present day. Here again, the amelioration will be an accomplished fact, if a convention or compact among interdining classes, such as I have alluded to as regards early marriages, takes place and is given practical effect to. Even if such men are not prepared to enter into such a convention or compact, there is the other solution, in respect of commensality, which I have formulated and enlarged upon and on which they might well fall back, if there is any earnestness about the matter.

As to travel or sojourn in foreign lands, the Smrithis themselves show how the horizon of liberty has been gradually widening from time to time. Not to tire by quotations, I may succinctly state that, from having been confined to limits which were pretty-well defined, we were allowed, as time went on, to wander into Anga, Vanga, Kalinga and other then forbidden regions, on condition of re-performance of Dwija-making-rites and finally no one at the present day dreams of any taint or penances in residing in those countries. It looks as though the rule was originally conceived by the Aryan settlers in this country in order to maintain their distinctiveness and,

perhaps, their superiority when they were a small band, and as though it was made slacker and slacker as they multiplied and as the exigencies for extended elbow-room became more and more pressing. The gradual relaxation of the original rigid precept, eventuating in a final *carte-blanche* to roam over the length and breadth of this country, is perhaps due to the welcome experience that their views and methods of life insinuated themselves into the affections of those they came into contact with and found favour with them and because they feared no contamination or reaction from those others. It is intelligible and explicable that this liberating process should make a dead stop where the limits of their influence met with a definite check by the intervention of the sea-board. At this stage, they would naturally be filled with vague alarms of conditions unknown to them and therefore uncontrollable by them and they therefore planted their foot at that point and decisively declared the inutility of even penance to wash the sea-gone man clean. If I am right in these ideas which I admit to be no better than speculations on my part, one thing is quite clear that ignorance of the countries beyond the seas must have played an important part and formless risks of possible, inexpiable pollution in going or residing there must have flitted against their timorous fancy. I am not sure that, even in the present day when a great deal is known about those countries, there is not, for all that, quite an amazing lack of correct and reassuring knowledge among the generality of our countrymen, to block the way of further liberation. In these circumstances I for one am at a loss to see how, on this question, which, of all the questions now agitating the country, has secured the smallest strength numerically,—though the largest in intensity—a narrowing of the sphere of contention is quite as feasible as in other cases; for I am not satisfied that, in discussing the strictly Shastraic issue

arising on this topic, the wish of the heart has not, too often, been the parent of thought of the head or that reasons have not been, equally often, found or conjured up to uphold a foregone conclusion, on both sides. This is but natural. On one side, intuitive notions of fitness of things claim to determine the standard of right and wrong, while on the other side comes into play the still-lingering veneration for sentiment and for hoary and seemingly approved ideas of admittedly sagacious men—sagacious in and for their time from the modern point of view but sagacious beyond comparison in the eye of the orthodox erudites. In the midst of this exhibition of overflowing pugnacity all round, what has appeared to me, by the light—such as it is—of my own humble researches, as the best and soundest opinions are the opinions embodied in the well-reasoned and calmly-expressed exposition by the late Sree Krishna Thatha Chariar, one of our earliest Mahamahopadhyayas and perhaps the greatest of them by reason of his versatile powers and his varied and many-sided Sanskrit learning. Leaving it to my readers to read his neat little brochure, which, owing to its not being printed in Devanagari, has lacked the wide publicity and the respectful attention it deserves, I shall just state his findings and his verdict. Combatting the intolerant view that there is no penance to wash a sea-gone man pure, he has affirmatively established, with chapter and verse and with his power of logic, that, as a fact, there is such a penance and what form that penance should take. By way of disillusionising persons who, in an excess of unconscious bias, jump to the conclusion that, where there is penance, there is the disappearance of all taint, he admits the view as generally correct but as only correct, in this respect, to a qualified extent, *i.e.*, only to the extent of re-instating the penitent in his lost chances to work for his salvation by the means and in accordance with the scheme, formulated by the Aryan

faith in that behalf. Lastly, he examines, with quite a judicial precision, the genuineness and the true significance of a text which in terms vetoes association even with the expiated sea-gone man in Kali age and records his frank conclusion that the text alone blocks the way and could not be fairly explained away. As I have said already, I for one accept these utterances; but nevertheless I maintain that there is a hopeful way out of it by agitating to create a general repugnance against it, such as would render it a dead letter on that score, on the strength of the text already once dwelt upon—unless indeed the Gordian knot is cut by a consensus of opinion, brought about to abandon the restrictions on commensality on the grounds I have heretofore indicated.

Whether the requisite degree of repugnance exists, is the question to which we may narrow the issue on this topic, if my view on the Shastraic provisions is accurate. If it did, then it would be a mere matter of convention or compact, on this point also, on the part of interdining sets, similar to what I have suggested more than once in the earlier cases. If however they do not exist, then agitation for immediate action in a social sense—is, to my mind, premature; but, an agitation is necessary all the same for opening the eyes of those who do not realise the precise situation and for getting them to develop repugnance on what at present virtually checkmates a decidedly serviceable move. This may perhaps be the fittest place to notice the cry of impatience with which an advice to conciliate the general public is often received. The occasion is at least as good as any other. To the touching—may I not say, touchy—exclamation, "are we to wait till the 'multitudinous donkey' is taught up to the mark," my answer is that we need not imagine any such animal as requiring to be reckoned with. If I may speak in like metaphor, what we do meet with is rather a few flocks of multitudinous sheep, each with its

bell-wethers. To win over these bell-wethers is the most that is needed in each fold. Do this and the pens will empty and their sequacious inmates will follow as meekly and submissively as the body does the will or as the tail does the trunk. To expect triumph in bringing foreign travel into vogue even without this measure of successful effort is, as I venture to think, a trifle too unreasonable—notwithstanding that every one who makes bold or finds it possible to pioneer the way is entitled to unambiguous and unstinted praise.

I shall next briefly dwell upon the paramount question of rights of property which should belong to our women—rights which, as I have said, constitute one of the two Herculean pillars on which I build great hopes of advancing the aspirations under the several heads in the reform programme. It is impossible for a lawyer to avoid talking shop to a certain extent on this point. But I shall endeavour to be untechnical and unwearisome and I shall try to bring myself down to the level of the lay mind. I may well start with asking the general reader to take the following for granted, *viz.*, (1) that Manu and Yagnyavalkya are admittedly the foremost Smrithi-writers, (2) that the latter of them is fuller and more systematic of the two in laying down the principles of inheritance and succession, governing the bulk of us, (3) that as Yagnyavalkya is virtually the prince of Smrithi-writers, so is the author of the Mitakshara, his most accepted commentary, the prince of Smrithi-expounders, (4) that, while professing to do no more than to elucidate the meaning of Yagnyavalkya's texts *seriatim*, the author of the Mitakshara has brought to the task his wide and varied range of learning and his high logical powers and produced, in the result, a treatise coming up to a comprehensive code [illegible]ng nearly all subjects which one need know, [illegible] sciences and the tenets of religion, (5) that the

authority of Mitakshara is accepted all over the country except in Bengal and except in a small area in the Western Presidency where Nilakantha generally follows in his footsteps, differing in some few respects, but reverentially bowing to him and (6) that in recognising the claims of women to property, the schools of Bengal and Nilakantha have gone further than even the author of the Mitakshara who, as I shall presently show, has, however, laid down (as one may well say) quite enough to give them a fair amount of practical independence on that score. It would therefore suffice to notice what is expounded in Yagnyavalkya Smrithi and in its great commentary, the Mitakshara, on the subject in question. The following texts of Yagnyavalkya are in point :—

Yagnyavalkya :—

यदिकुर्यात्समानंशान् पत्न्येःकार्याःसमांशिकाः ।
नदत्तंस्त्रीधनंयासां भर्त्रावाश्वशुरेणवा ॥

Yadi kuryâth samanamsan patnyeh karyah samamsikah Na dattam streedhanam yasam bharthrava swasurenava.

Meaning : If he make the allotments equal, his wives to whom no Stridhanam has been given by the husband or the father-in-law, must be made partakers of equal portions.

असंस्कृतास्तुसंस्कार्याः भ्रातृभिःपूर्वसंस्कृतैः ।
भगिन्यश्चनिजादंशाद्दत्वांशं तु तुरीयकम् ॥

Asamskruthasthu samskaryah brathribhih poorvasamskrithyh

Bhaginyascha Nijadamsath dathwamsamthu thureeyakam.

Meaning : Uninitiated sisters should have their ceremonies performed by those brothers who have a[...]y been initiated, giving them a quarter of one's own sh[...]

I may say at once that I, for one, would be quite content with a practical acceptance of the law as is here enunciated in lucid language, as it would not in the least dislocate the existing rules of inheritance but merely reduce, by but a comparative trifle, the shares that sons would, otherwise, take. But the earliest expounder of the principle of law contained in these texts, Bharuchi, attempted to pervert it by whistling away the distinct and fixed fraction therein given to sisters and fathers' wives at partition among brothers or their representatives and by substituting for the fourth share specified therein, merely an indefinite and variable quantity, limited to what might suffice for maintenance, marriage expenses and so forth. This construction was however refuted and set aside by Medhathithi, a later expounder of great repute—one who earned the honoured title of Asahaya, which no less than the illustrious author of the Mitakshara has ungrudgingly acknowledged. The result was that when the Mitakshara came to be composed, the narrower or rather the erroneous interpretation by Bharuchi had already been set at rest and our women became, once again, fully entitled to their absolute rights to the definite allotments of the texts, under the sanction of Medhathithi. On this latter and liberal or sound exposition, the author of the Mitakshara placed the stamp of his high approval, pointing out the fallacy of construing a self-contained definite dictum into a vague utterance which is to be the caper ground for individual caprice—be it the idiosyncrasy of the partitioning parties or the eccentricity of the Judge who may have to adjudicate on it. One would think that, in common fairness, this thrice-blessed authoritative declaration must be decisive—made as it indeed was, not as a matter of first impression, but by the plain terms of the text, made, if possible, plainer by a verdict of preference on a full consideration of the only conflict which had been raised on it. But this was not to be. Up rose,

at a later date, I would fain say, a pretender, a third expounder, the author of Smrithi Chandrika, whose illiberal views are only equalled by his extravagant pretensions which reached the climax when he hurled at such a universally revered personality as the author of the Mitakshara, epithets like "prattler," "self-sufficient man" and so forth. That this consequential scholiast was really as old as he was taken to be, at the time he was smuggled into a position of authority, is not established; while there is good room to suspect whether he does not enjoy a false and adventitious importance originating in his Dattaka Chandrika being confounded with a treatise of that name attributed to the great Madhava Chariar, distinguished by the honoured epithet Vidyaranya. Add to this the exposure of him and his Dattaka Chandrika by that ripe scholar, the learned Tagore lecturer Gopal Chander Sarkar, and we should have no hesitation in repudiating, as spurious and unsound, the deliverances of that Sir Oracle. To see that our courts go back and, if they would not, that we ourselves disinterestedly go back, to the logical, sound and clear law as enunciated by two such eminent exponents of Smrithi, as Medhathithi and Vignaneswara is a duty which lies heavily on every apostle of reform and there ought to be no difficulty on the score of the length of time for which the error has had the lease. We should remind our judges and we should remind ourselves that a like error was rectified more than once; for instance, in the case of the sister's and the sister's sons' claims and in the case of the creditors' rights to enforce a son's pious duty to pay the debts of the father, where they were neither illegal nor immoral. In the face of these precedents, I recognise neither justice nor reason in any plea, based on the longevity of the mischief, worked on the strength of a pretender to authoritative weight and antiquity. Nothing short of a mistaken sense of shame to frankly acknowledge that we have been

led astray under false pretences ought to bar our return to justice and fair play to our women in this matter of superlative moment. Let feelings of chivalry, if we really have them, stimulate in us a readiness to put our convictions into practice in this regard. This is all that is needed. If we further adequately realise how this property-independence—which, I maintain, is legitimately theirs—will, like all forms and measures of independence, is bound to benefit not only its possessors but every one within the reach and influence of such possessors, our very instincts of selfishness should prompt us to move heaven and earth to obtain a reversal of the blunder, the effects of which degrade our women and derogate from our character for straightforwardness and generosity. Before I pass away from this subject, I wish to emphasise that I desire no legislation under this or any other head of our internal economy. In the first place, it is next to impossible to get the bulk of our legislators, who cannot have our keenness on such points, to realise how dreadfully earnest we are on them. At best, they will give us the half-hearted help which is the *sine qua non* of good-natured and soft-hearted souls who cannot bring themselves to say a brutal nay. In the next place, we must despair of achieving any good on matters in which the Government are not interested, under a system of legislation which seeks for none and swears by none but high-placed official and officialised voices and ears and therefore hears not murmurs and spies not muddles on lower, plebean planes—which makes no provision for taking evidence to guage the public feeling as in the case of the recent Malabar Marriage Act—and which is resolved to get through the largest amount of cut and dry law-making, within the shortest space of time. Let us further note and take warning from the mode the work was done by the good souls who passed the Widow Marriage Act. All honour to them and may God and man bless their

memory! For all that, who can fail to detect that, in their overflowing sympathy, they gave us a law, which, in their nervous fear of bringing a hornet's nest about their ears, they managed, as it were, to render quite abortive. They were between the devil and the deep sea and they contrived to scuttle out of the job, offering solatium to one side or administering solace to the other side to the question. But they either forgot or conveniently ignored how the dullest person believes that a bird in hand is two in bush. That they should have ever seriously persuaded themselves into hoping that matrimonially-disposed widows would begin with giving up the certainty of present possession for a problematic prospect of being no worse, would be incredible without a pile of affidavits in support. In putting our houses in order, we might therefore take a warning not only from that piece of legislation but also—if I may say so, without the risk of being misunderstood as pleading for my little bantling—from the manner the ill-conceived and ill-framed Pagoda Act came into being—an Act which has stood untouched, notwithstanding that it has been an unremedied scandal for nearly two score years, without raising a single, solitary beat of official pulse at the frightful spoliation of property, innocently but piously endowed for charity to man and service to God—though to a "heathen" man and to a "heathen" god.

The only remaining topic on which I have promised observations is the education of our women. There are, on the topic of education of women, certain general arguments which apply equally to all latitudes and longitudes, where germs, aptitudes and plastic energies exist for a progressive or regenerative change. These are put in a delightfully humourous, yet trenchant and popularly-convincing manner in a paper, contributed to the then youthful and vigorous *Edinburgh Review*, nearly a hundred years ago, by Sidney Smith, one of the most robust-minded and plain-

spoken men of his day. If it were in my power to dovetail in this connection large extracts from that storehouse of masterly exposition and felicitous expression, I should indeed be glad—if only to illumine thereby the views I hold and venture to express here. It is however not in my power to do more than cite or adapt but a very few, pithy sentences of his, as conclusive answers to certain platitudes, forebodings and nervous fears, which run away with the judgments of not a small percentage of men. For the benefit of the affrighted paterfamilias who dreads decadence of maternal duties in the disappearance or diminution of female ignorance, he points to the stern, consolatory truth that nature has so imperatively and rigidly provided for the fulfilment of her functions that no mother could or would forsake her children for a quadratic equation. Upon the dictatorial major domo of the household, who would relegate and restrict womankind to ministrations in the sick chamber and like spheres for the display of tender and benevolent emotions, he retorts that—excellent, noble and heroic as it is to compassionate,—one cannot be compassionating from eight o'clock in the morning till twelve at night, *i.e.*, from day-break to bed-time. To the simple-minded and easily-gulled domestic autocrat who would asseverate that, seeing how all-engrossing have been the demands of kitchen duties and nursery requirements on our women's time, the claims of intellectual or literary culture could secure little or no appreciable leisure and have little or no chance, there is the apt reply that, if performed with an eye to the value of time and with the perception of other and higher *vocations*, those duties and requirements would actually take a tithe of the time which is now seemingly absorbed. To the complacent soul which is not observant enough to be struck or scandalised by prevalent disparities between men and women, in an educational sense, he has the cruelly uncompromising frankness

to ask why should a woman of forty know less than a boy of eighteen?

To these dialectic tit-bits, each and every of which literally applies to the exigencies in our midst, I venture to add a few remarks of my own, as suggested by the special conditions under which and the special purposes for which female education has to be pushed forward among us. Say what the exceptionally ardent of the English-educated sections may to the contrary, it is no use mincing matters or hiding the fact that there are heaps of parents and guardians, not to speak of husbands also, who discount—mentally at least—the education of our women on the ground that it is forced upon us by the uncongenial example of our present rulers and on the ground that our girls are placed beyond the needs of earning a livelihood by the injunction in our Smrithis, *i. e.*, the repositories of the wisdom of our forefathers, that, as a rule, every boy shall marry and beget children as a matter of inviolable, religious duty and that every girl shall, equally as a matter of inviolable religious duty, be ushered into an early wedded life as an act of first indispensable sacrament for her and as the indispensable help-mate of man in his discharge of obligations to his god and his forefathers.

Being thus, as a matter of unfailing course, provided with a bread-winner, the girl lacks the earnest motive, say they, which, despite all vehement hortotory homilies in favour of seeking knowledge for its own sake, will practically govern conduct. In plain English, education to our fair sex is but an exotic luxury and no such luxury need be enforced in right earnest, though a make-believe of it must be kept up to save appearances. To this specious plea there are two answers.

Taking the latter argument first, a little reflection will show how that very plea supplies, singularly enough,

the most cogent piece of reasoning *in favour* of educating our women; because, *ex hypothesi*, there must be on their hands a number of hours and vast stores of energy over and above what are requisitioned by the most exacting domestic and household duties—extra hours and extra energies which, with the faculties and aptitudes with which they are endowed as human beings, they ought to usefully employ but which they could not altogether use up in talking scandal, in sighing for rich articles of jewellery and clothing not possessed, or gloating over those possessed, in indulgence in forced, half-wakeful slumbers or in dawdling over the laborious trifles of decorating and performing the toilet of themselves, their daughters and the daughters of kinsmen and neighbours—the bulk of the occupations, now open to a good proportion of our women to fill up and kill vacant time. Viewed even in the light of getting rid of *ennui* and even in the light of turning into resources of personal happiness the talents and capabilities with which the Maker has dowered them, education seems the best means to adopt; for, as has been well said, no entertainment is better and chaster than the recreation of reading. As to its being a foreign hobby thrust upon us, the forefathers of those very forefathers who are relied upon and rightly relied upon, as absolving our women from toiling in search, of an unassured means of keeping themselves in decent comfort, had, I think, insisted, with equal stress and as a matter of necessary implication, on education of our girls (1) by conceiving or representing the deity, presiding over learning, as a *Goddess* and (2) by having prescribed Oopanayana for them as well as for boys so much as to give the former the option of living out their lives as pious, learning-devoted celibates under the designation of Brahmavadins, as distinguished from Sadyovadhus whose Oopanayana was to be on the eve of marriage which was immediately to follow. I find the texts bearing on this point, cited in the

great Madhavachariar's Commentary on Parasara Smrithi and in the works of Vaidyanath Dikshit, a learned and highly honoured writer of over three hundred years ago and one too, whom the High Court of Madras has accepted as an authority. As many persons of no inconsiderable erudition seem not to be aware of them, I take the liberty to reproduce them here. They are :—

Hareetha Sutra :—

द्विविधास्त्रियो ब्रह्मवादिन्यस्सद्योवध्वश्च तत्र ब्रह्मवादिनीनामुपनयनं अग्नीन्धनं वेदाध्ययनं स्वगृहे भिक्षचर्येतिसद्योवधूनां तूपस्थिते विवाहे कथंचिदुपनयनं कृत्वा विवाहः कार्यः ॥

Dwividhastriyo brahmavadinyassadyovadhwascha thathra brahmavadineenamupanayanam agneendhanam vedadhyayanam swagrihe bhikshacharyethi sadyovadhoonam thupusthithe vivahê kathanchith upanayanam krithwavivahah karyah.

Meaning :—Females are of two classes, *viz.*, Brahmavadins and Sadyovadhus. Of these, to Brahmavadins belong rights of Oopanayana, of sacred fire, and of religious mendicancy within home—To Sadyovadhus, a sort of brief Oopanayana at the eve of their approaching marriage must be performed and then the rites of marriage.

Yamah :—

पुराकल्पेतुनारीणां मौंजीबन्धनमिष्यते ।
अध्यापनंचवेदानां सावित्रीवचनंतथा ॥
पिता पितृव्यो भ्रातावानैनामध्यापयेत्परः ।
स्वगृहेचैव कन्याया भैक्षाचर्यं विधीयते ।
वर्जयेदजिनंचीरं जटाधारणमेवच ॥

Purakalpe thu nareenam maunjeebandhanamishyathe
Adhyapanam cha vedanam savithreevachanam thatha
Pitha pithrivyo bhrathava nynamadhyapayethparah
Swagrihechaiva kanyayah bhykshacharyam vidheeyathe
Varjayethajinum cheerum jatatharanamevacha.

Meaning:—In former kalpa, girls had mounjee put upon them (had Oopanayana performed). They were instructed in the Vedas and were taught in Savithree. They were taught Vedas either by their fathers, or uncles or brothers and by none others. They carried on the religious mendicancy in their own homes and they were exempt from using deer-skin, the bachelor's clothing and matted hair.

It being thus clear that female education is neither an alien crotchet nor a negligible commodity from an Aryan stand point, the next question is what form it should take with us.

It may be roughly stated that there are four theories on the subject of education of women: *viz.*, (1) that which will enable them to have in themselves resources for personal happiness and to command respect and deferential esteem or "the personal happiness theory;" as we may briefly call it: (2) that which will make them a bundle of accomplishments and entertaining companions or "the personal accomplishment theory" as it may be termed: (3) that which will turn them into rivals of the sterner sex and drive them into battling against the latter for university honors, for civic and other public functions, and for distinctions and preferments in the many exacting walks of life, which men now monopolise or predominate in; or "the new woman theory" as it may be styled by way of utilising a prevalent expression of the latest date: and (4) that which will render them partners in life of their husbands, in the sense of earnest and sympathetic auxiliaries of the latter in their life's altruistic work and aspirations or "the

lever and fulcrum theory," as I should designate it to convey my meaning.

I have little to say on the first two of these theories, beyond remarking that, so far as they go, the results are unquestionably good but that, if there is no wider ambition, there is but an intelligent self-love at bottom and that the women, educated up to those standards, are therefore practically no proximate helps in the *general* advance of their sex or the community to which they belong, though as so many units augmenting the numerical strength of cultured intelligence in the community, they are inestimable and are worthy of honourable mention as so many shining lights in its midst. Even if education should make no greater advance than to swell the numbers falling under these two theories for a generation to come, the result would still be beneficial and cheering enough, having regard to how much has to be confronted, conciliated and subdued. As sure as the day follows the twilight, so surely are altruistic tendencies and cravings of the modern kind bound to develop in them, when education has grown more common, when educated women have become more numerous and when the possession of educated intelligence and its advantages shall cease to be distinctions by themselves or when they shall not suffice as merely minstrant to mutual pleasure for cultured couples, united for life and blest with abundant energy.

As to the third or the new woman theory, it need not vex our souls or embarrass us, at least for a very, very long time to come. It is however worthy of note that to us Hindus the conception is by no means an altogether novel one ; for unless I am seriously mistaken, the Brahmavadins to whom I have alluded and of whom I have given some idea already, of remote ancestors, were but concrete instances of the theory in question. What is of far greater moment for us to note is that our early forefathers not only antici-pated the conception of the new woman but also realised

the limitations, to which it was necessarily subject, as shown by their leaving it to individual cases to become Brahmavadins or not. That so few had taken advantage of the option is perhaps a practical adumbration of the strong objection which is now levelled against the theory and its products. Be that as it may, the fact is indisputable that there is a dead set against the class and it is worthy of note that it is not the outcome of any such idiosyncratic intolerance as invented the epithet, the blue-stocking. So far as I am able to judge, it has a deeper origin and a far solider basis in the ultimate physical and physiological data and it is well to take note of the weighty anti-new woman theory, while yet we are on the threshhold of it as a people. In this view and as a timely warning, I subjoin, for the benefit of the general reader, a few extracts for which I am indebted to my scholarly and brilliant friend Dr. T. Madhavan Nair.

(*a*) "There is a growing tendency around us," says Sir James Crighton Browne, "to ignore intellectual distinctions between the sexes, to assimilate the education of girls to that of boys, to throw men and women into industrial competition in every walk of life and to make them compeers in social intercourse and political privileges."

(*b*) "The anatomical distinction between men and women," says Dr. T. M. Nair in a paper he read before a select yet highly-appreciative audience, "involves every organ and tissue in the body. They extend from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, for, according to Broca, the female cranium is less elevated than that of the male."

(*c*) "It is a matter of scientific observation," says Dr. T. M. Nair in the same paper, "that in all peoples and races without exception, the absolute weight of the entire brain is on an average greater in man than in woman, though of course individual women do sometimes possess larger and heavier brains than individual men." In explanation of the

fact insisted on in this passage, Dr. Nair gives certain figures which I omit here, to economise space, more especially as they may be dry and uninteresting to the general reader.

(*d*) "That this difference in the weight of male and female brains," I still quote from Dr. Nair, " is a fundamental sexual distinction and is not to be accounted for by the hypothesis that environment, educational advantages and habits of life, acting through a long series of generations, have stimulated the growth of the cerebrum in one sex more than in the other, is made clear by the fact that the same differences in weight have been found in savage races. It is an established fact that even an extra ounce of brain matter might involve an enormous mental difference... As to the quality of the grey matter in the brain, it has been found by Sir James Crighton Browne that the specific gravity of the grey-matter in frontal lobest (the seat of intellect) in the male is 1036 or 1037 whereas in the female it is only 1034. . . . It is ascertained . . that there is a difference in the blood supply of the two brains as well. And we know that blood supply is in some degree a measure of functional activity."

(*e*) "In a high school for girls," says Sir James Crighton Browne, which he once examined in England, " out of 187 girls belonging to the upper and middle classes, well fed and clad and cared for, and ranging from 10 to 17 years of age, as many as 137 complained of headaches, which in 65 cases occurred occasionally, in 48 cases occurred frequently and in 24 cases occurred habitually."

(*f*) "This return (*i.e.*, in the preceding extract) represents," continues Sir James Crighton Browne, " no exceptional state of things. A very large proportion of high school girls suffer from headache; neuralgia is common among them and they display multifarious indications of nervous exhaustion."

I wish I could, but I dare not, give more extracts from

the excellent and thoughtful paper, the whole of which is worth reading for its high medical value and its sparkling literary grace. It may be that, in this matter, doctors have taken violent views to spite the usually egotistic pedagogue and the self-opinionated college-professor. But, making the amplest allowance on that account, it is expedient for laymen to act upon them rather than set them at nought. It is, besides, noteworthy that, on the subject of female education, there have been within this century a succession of dogmatisms which one may aptly call the game of battle door and shuttlecock. First, the rage was all for accomplishments. Then there was a reaction and it favoured the propaganda which took no account of any original differences in the conformation of male and female minds and intellects—a propaganda to which even so level-headed a man as Sidney Smith unconditionally succumbed. That has gone on, gaining strength with the lapse of years ever since and it has matured into a means of producing the new woman. This has apparently caused a widespread alarm and the result is—to borrow the coinage of a great writer—a re-reaction, converting the female educational triumph, which had fascinated while yet an unaccomplished fact, into a target for medical, social and political shafts envenomed with sarcasm and sharpened by masculine intolerance. The equilibrium may yet be reached before we shall have gone too far. But, for all that, we should do well to do nothing which might force the theory of the new woman on our sisters and daughters and drive them into multiplying as the modern counter-parts of the Brahmavadins of old. For all that men may do, there will always grow up a few who, like the wives of John Stuart Mill and Mr. Fawcett of recent years and like Mrs. Marcet, Mrs. Somerville and Miss Martineau of a remoter date, may rise superior to the deliverances and vaticinations of doctors, physicists and political seers and may brave the strictures of social and

satirical censors. When they burst into view, without head-aches, with healthy skins and with plenty of blood-laden corpuscles, let us honor them with unfeigned pleasure and ungrudging praise, though we should, at the same time, shrink from marking them out as examplars for wide imitation.

I shall next and last proceed to make a few remarks on what I have called "the lever and fulcrum theory" of education for women. In doing so, I have first to point out, in express terms, what the reader has probably already perceived, that, in indicating the categories falling under the theories which I have ventured severally to enunciate, it has been no purpose of mine to define mutually-exclusive classes. My object was simply to call attention to prominent, *differentiating* features. Freedom and upward progress from ignorance constitute the thread that runs through them all; and, while the second is but an advance on the first by the addition of a further distinguishing mark, the last two are distinct divergences from the vantage ground, attained by the successful application of the first two theories. To educate with a view to develop powers of pleasing husbands and pure-minded friends is, as must be obvious, only a forward step upon the system of education for personal happiness of its recipients. From being self-centred in the main, a move is thereby made to take into the reckoning also the pleasure of others, though of a comparatively limited number. When we come to the third, there is a parting of ways, if I may say so. Thence there is a deflection in two different lines. The aim or rather the effect of the former of the last two theories would be to further accentuate the self-centered resources, while the object and the result of the latter of them would be beneficially to enlarge the circumscribed circle.

The glory and the crown of heroic absolute self-sacrifice are indeed too sublime to descend on the pate and cranium

of every mortal man or woman; for they are essentially divinely-bestowed and they are reserved for men who count for a million each and whose number is extremely small in the economy of nature. But it is given to most men and women, if they are so minded, to live not a little for others' sake as they do for their own. In this work of moderate philanthropy, man's strength of purpose and of aspirations, where they exist, will redouble itself, in case his wedded consort is also fitted by suitable education to unite her sympathy and co-operation. What then is the suitable education, which is needed?

The education of our girls, as of our boys, is a good deal in the hands or under the direction of men, women and bodies hailing from far off lands and with systems of social forces, prepossessions and preconceptions not altogether in unison with even the enlightened opinion which pervades our social structure.

Their ideas and methods are indeed as unexceptionable as their motives from their point of view, arising as they do and suggested as they are by the motives that operate and the experiences that have been acquired in their respective places of birth and growth or in other less ancient, less advanced and—as some would be inclined to say—less penetrable peoples than ours happen to be. For this, among other reasons, their efforts, without the least blame attaching to them, have been and (I fear) are destined to be, far from efficacious, for all their zeal.

They have, as is only too natural, borrowed from the personal accomplishment scheme which still holds ground in their land and, as the result, the needle and skeins of thread have played an important part in the girls' curriculum of studies, irrespective of the condition of the family to which she belonged or into which she might expect to be grafted. A smattering of their mother-tongue, and not unoften of English as well, finishes

their school career by the time they reach the borderland of pubescence, which, so far as the caste-girls are concerned—and they make up the bulk—is the ultima thule for one and all of them, for going out of doors. This is often referred to, with regret, by school-managers as handicapping the work they take up but cut short on that account. For my part, I do not think that it should actually intercept the course of education, though it may put an end to continuance in school. Between the period when this interdiction takes place and the period of the girls joining their husbands, the interval is far too short to sap the foundations that have been laid or to quench the thirst that has been created. In the years which ensue till they become mothers of children, at least a few half-hours a day may be made easily available, if only each husband will realise that, in accepting the bride as a gift, he has accepted the rôle of leading her in the path of usefulness and rectitude. For such a work, if not for love's dalliances, our social framework may be made to afford scope without hitch or dislocation or disruption. Time and reasonable facilities being thus secured, the kind of studies that should be chosen is the only further question. There may be much difference of opinion on this point in matters of detail. But I think all will agree that, so far as "the literature of power" is concerned we have enough and to spare. It is "the literature of knowledge" which does not so much as exist for our women unless indeed English is made the vehicle of learning.

This situation presents, as regards our women in general, a problem which needs far greater practical consideration than I venture to think it has as yet received. Add to it the further problem of no less importance and urgency raised by the fact that European ladies are beginning—I had almost said have already begun and are regretting the paucity of their chances—to seek intercourse

with the better situated of their Hindu sisters, in a spirit of sympathetic kindliness. It is time that both these problems are earnestly grappled with. With a difference which will be presently specified as regards the latter problem, it may be stated, in short, that the creation of a good vernacular literature of knowledge, either by means of translations or of original composition, is a necessary condition precedent in respect of both. Once this desideratum is secured, I feel quite certain that its mastery by our keenly acquisitive girls is as good as accomplished. The equipment thus secured must be supplemented, as regards our more favoured classes, with a decent colloquial acquaintance with English to make them fitted to reciprocate the good feeling and friendliness of their European sisters so as to be productive of mutual respect, mutual pleasure and mutual benefit, none of which can be expected from the now-prevalent practice of our women being trotted out before their European hostesses with an exchange of bland smiles as in a government levee or being detained —each for a few minutes—for a scrap or two of pantomimic or interpreted conversation on trivial matters as in a garden party which would admit of nothing more and nothing else. Into greater detail I cannot go just at present, as I have already exceeded unduly the limits of the reader's patience. Enough to emphasise that to widen the horizon of their knowledge and make them read of other people must prove the solvent of many errors which must give way. Such a course may incidentally lead to some changes in dress and domestic furniture and so forth—changes at which some men would turn up their eye-balls and cry themselves hoarse that a deluge of denationalisation was coming, as if the tailor and the cabinet-maker, the shoemaker and the weaver conjointly settle the momentous question of nationality. The outcry, oftener than not, is the outcome of race-jealousy which is "fashed"

by the disappearance of *visible* marks of fancied superiority; for who could be so green as not to see, in calmer moments, that the imitation they condemn is dictated, after all, by considerations of greater convenience and decency and is, in fact, a compliment, paid to those that are imitated. Assuming that some undesirable changes in these and like respects will creep in, to set the face against education in order to keep out these eventualities is like laming oneself, lest one may commit trespasses.

I have three words more before I conclude. The first is a word of apology for the length of this paper which, to use the well-known paradox, is long because I have had no time to write a shorter one. The second is a word of explanation for having cited, whenever I have cited texts, those ready to hand, irrespective of the question if they were the best to quote. The third is a word of hope that I may be taken to have done my utmost to avoid giving pain and to write without bias and with the purpose of suggesting to the average Hindu how best *he* could advance, without giving up or being set down as giving up his orthodox status altogether, and without violently breaking away from the fold to which he belongs, if he wished to be an intelligent and useful member admissibly within it.

III.—The Temperance Problem in India.

By W. S. Caine, Esq., M. P.

The Temperance problem in India is almost entirely a product of British rule. The ancient Hindu no doubt had his own Temperance problem to solve. In the Vedas we find ample evidence of the drinking habits of the primitive Indo-Aryan who drank freely of the intoxicating juice of the sacred Soma or moonplant, with which he offered libations to his gods. But the Hindu was soon roused to a sense of the evil which he most manfully put down directly he became conscious of it. In the post-Vedic period of ancient Indian history, the strongest interdiction was put upon the use of all intoxicating liquors ; and at a still later period when the great law books were compiled, the drinking of spirituous liquors was named as one of the five mortal sins which a Hindu could commit. The practice thus strongly forbidden came henceforth to be confined to the lowest and aboriginal classes of the Indian populations who were then practically outside the pale of the Hindu community. Later on, however, a new religious cult arose, called the Tantra, under which drink was associated with religious exercises. In the sixteenth century there arose in Bengal a great Brahmin prophet, Chaitanya, who absolutely prohibited the use of intoxicating liquors among his followers, giving them instead what he called "the new wine of Divine love," with which (we are told) he was himself constantly drunk and in which "he finally drowned himself." Like Buddha, Chaitanya raised a vigorous protest against caste and the ceremonial sacrifices which involved the use of strong liquors, and as a result of his preaching the Temperance problem, as it affected the lower classes of the population in Bengal, was effectively solved. This movement was still in progress when the

British went to India. But it cannot be said that it was helped by the British occupation. It is true that for the first twenty-five or thirty years after the East India Company was invested with sovereign power no excise regulations were set up. But the Government soon became aware that a considerable revenue might be derived from this source and accordingly in 1790-91 the first excise regulations were promulgated, ostensibly for the purpose of suppressing the evils of drunkenness and illicit distillation. The greater evil of Government sanction and control soon became evident.

In 1799, Mr. Wordsworth, the Magistrate and Collector of Rungpore, in Bengal, sent a representation to the Government complaining of the increase in drunkenness, and the numerous vicious practices that are universally associated with it, which he most distinctly attributed to the new Excise Regulations. Opinions of other magistrates were called for, who also, to a large extent, supported the views expressed by Mr. Wordsworth.

Practically nothing was done to change the policy of the Government, and the Excise system was gradually extended in one form and another until it covered the whole of the British dominions in India. The results were most deplorable. Liquor shops were opened all over the country. Officials of the Government openly encouraged the sale of drink, and the supreme authorities, blinded by considerations of revenue, did nothing to check the evil. Many Indian social reformers became alarmed at the prospect and urged the Government to introduce restrictions. They were so far listened to that a commission was appointed in 1883-84 to enquire into the liquor traffic in Bengal. Very little came of this commission although it had to admit, in its report, that not more than two-fifths of the growth of the revenues could be attributed to such normal causes as the growth of population and the increas-

ing prosperity of the people. This report made it very clear that at least 50 per cent. of the increase in the Excise revenue was due to the action of the Government and its officials in forcing up revenues at the expense of the physical, social and moral welfare of the people.

I think I may claim to be the first Englishman who seriously investigated the Excise policy of the Indian Government. I made my first visit to India in the winter of 1887-88. My attention was drawn to the subject by a deputation which waited upon me in Bombay, consisting of some of the leading gentlemen of that city. They expressed a strong desire that some organization should be formed in England with a view to Parliamentary action, and also for the purpose of promoting and guiding an agitation throughout India for Temperance reform. I made some further enquiries into the matter, and convinced myself that India was threatened with all the *evil results* of the drink traffic with which we in this country are so familiar. On my return to England a meeting of members of Parliament and Temperance reformers was convened at the London residence of Mr. Samuel Smith, M.P., at which the Anglo-Indian Temperance Association was formed with the avowed object of resisting the spread of drinking facilities in India and of promoting total abstinence among the natives. Mr. Smith was elected President and I undertook the Secretaryship.

I returned to India in the following winter and made a prolonged tour with the Rev. Thomas Evans. We formed Temperance societies in nearly every place we visited and much enthusiasm was aroused in favour of Temperance reform. During this tour I made a complete study of the Excise administration of the country. I found that the methods of administration differed considerably in the various provinces, but that it was everywhere based upon

what is known as the "farming system." This system still prevails in certain districts.

Licences for working distilleries of ardent spirits and opening liquor shops for their sale are granted for certain defined areas to the highest bidder. In some provinces the spirits are manufactured by the Government, and the right to retail only is let to farmers. The Government of India contended that this system was calculated to produce the maximum of revenue with a minimum of drunkenness; that the principles on which it was based were these—*viz.*: that liquor should be taxed and consumption restricted as far as it was possible to do so without imposing positive hardships upon the people and driving them to illicit manufacture. They contended that they had been completely successful in carrying out this policy, and that the great increase of Excise revenue, taken as evidence of drinking habits by those who only looked upon the surface, really represented a much smaller consumption of liquor and an infinitely better regulated consumption than prevailed in former years. I found this opinion maintained, with few exceptions, by the English official class in India; but in my intercourse with educated natives I found a strongly contrary opinion universal, and this was also held by every missionary with whom I came in contact. Native opinion maintains with great pertinacity that the increase of Excise revenue—which is still going on, as I shall presently show—represents a proportionate increase of intemperance throughout India; that the Government, under the thin pretence of suppressing illicit manufacture, are stimulating the extension of spirit licenses for revenue purposes; and that they have established liquor shops in a large number of places where formerly such things were unknown, in defiance of native opinion, to the misery and ruin of the population.

On my return to England steps were immediately taken to bring the matter under the notice of Parliament,

and on 30th April 1889, Mr. Samuel Smith, M. P. moved the following resolution in the House of Commons:—

"That, in the opinion of this House, the fiscal system of the Government of India leads to the establishment of spirit distilleries, liquor and opium shops in large numbers of places, where, till recently, they never existed, in defiance of native opinion and protests of the inhabitants, and that such increased facilities for drinking produces a steadily increasing consumption, and spread misery and ruin among the industrial classes of India, calling for immediate action on the part of the Government of India with a view to their abatement."

I recorded the motion in a speech based upon the fact to which I have already referred and a long and interesting debate followed. Sir John Gorst, then Under-Secretary for India, speaking on behalf of the Government, met the resolution by a direct negative. The motion was also opposed by Sir Richard Temple, an ex-Governor of Bombay, and Sir James Fergusson, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who described it as "a very severe vote of censure on the Government of India." But in spite of this strong official opposition, and notwithstanding the fact that the Government had a large majority in the House, the resolution of censure was carried by 113 votes against 100, a majority of 13.

This was a great triumph for the cause of Temperance reform. The Secretary of State, Viscount Cross, sent a despatch to the Government of India embodying the resolution of the House of Commons. The Government of India took the matter up seriously, a thorough inquiry and investigation into the administration of the excise departments of the various provinces was instituted, and the defence of the Government of India was, after a lapse of eight months, published in a ponderous volume of 400 pages. That the policy of the Government was largely influenced by the resolution of the House of Commons will

be seen by the following extract from the *Gazette of India*, 1st March 1890:

"POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA IN MATTERS OF EXCISE.

"103. Looking to all the conditions of the very difficult problem with which we have to deal, we have after careful consideration, arrived at the conclusion that the only general principles which it is expedient or even safe to adopt are the following:—

"(1) That the taxation of spirituous and intoxicating liquors and drugs shall be high, and in some cases as high as it is possible to enforce:

"(2) That the traffic in liquor and drugs should be conducted under suitable regulations for police purposes:

"(3) That the number of places at which liquor or drugs can be purchased should be strictly limited with regard to the circumstances of each locality; and

"(4) That efforts should be made to ascertain the existence of local public sentiment, and that a reasonable amount of deference should be paid to such opinion when ascertained."

Thus the Government of India, always slow to move, at last instituted really serious reforms in many districts of the Indian Empire, and the alarming increase in the excise revenue was checked. But I regret to say that in recent years the excise revenue has again advanced. The effect of Parliamentary censure, I am afraid, has worn off and it is to be feared that the "general principles" set forth in the despatch already quoted, by which the excise department is professedly governed, are more often ignored than regarded. A comparison of the figures during the last twenty-five years will show how rapid the increase of the revenue has been:—

Net Excise Revenue of India

1874—75	1883—84	1894—95	1898—99
£1,755,000.	£2,840,000.	£3,965,000,	£4,127,000.

These figures reveal the startling fact that the revenue from intoxicants sold by a Christian Government to people whose religious and social habits are opposed to

the sale of liquor and drugs altogether has more than doubled itself during the last twenty-five years, The figures themselves may seem small as compared with the consumption per head in Britain; but it must be borne in mind that the average income per head of the population in India is only one thirtieth that of the United Kingdom and that India is still practically a nation of total abstainers, the consumption being confined (at present, at any rate) to about fifty millions of the population.

As I have said, it is to be feared that the restrictive regulations of the Government of India have been considerably relaxed of late. Many instances of this have been brought to the notice of the Committee of the Anglo-Indian Temperance Association. Any sign of a diminishing revenue from excise appears to fill the officials of the department with grave alarm. One example of this is to be found in the last report on Excise in the Madras Presidency where it is stated that there has been a decrease in the consumption of liquor during the year 1898-99. And also a falling-off in the number of shops. Any satisfaction which the friends of Temperance in India might feel with regard to this is, however, neutralized by the comments which the Madras Government make in their review of this particular report, for we are told that "*it is to be doubted whether the reduction has not in some cases gone too far*"; and further that "the Board of Revenue has settled, in communication with collectors, the maximum and the minimum number of shops to be opened in each district." As this indicates a change of policy on the part of the Madras Government, and having regard to the fact that similar views are finding favour with some of the other provincial Governments, the reader will agree with me that the time has come when the attention of Parliament and the public ought once more to be directed to this matter. Mr. Samuel Smith, M. P., has accordingly

placed the following notice of motion upon the order book of the House of Commons :—

"To call attention to the administration of Excise in India, by which many liquor-shops are being opened in various parts of India in direct violation of the expressed protests of the neighbourhood and in contradiction of the declared policy of the Government of India as formulated in their despatch to the Secretary of State, No. 29, February 4th, 1890, and to move a resolution."

In the meantime, however, the Total Abstinence work, carried on by the Anglo-Indian Temperance Association among the people of India, has made splendid progress. I have paid two more visits to India during the last ten years and more recently the General Secretary of the Anglo-Indian Temperance Association, Mr. F. Grubb, undertook a similar tour. As a result of these efforts a large number of Temperance societes have been established all over India. In this work we have been ably supported by the Rev. Thomas Evans, and by several influential vernacular lecturers, notably the Mahant Kesho Ram Roy, of Benares. This devoted Hindu was the means of inducing whole communities to prohibit the sale and consumption of strong drink among their members by caste rules. His death, which took place five years ago, was a great loss to the movement. In later years the Temperance cause has been admirably served by eloquent Indian lecturers, chief among whom have been Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal (Bengal) who was a delegate to the recent World's Temperance Congress, in London; Mr. Shyam Kishore Varma (N. W. P., Oudh and Behar); and Mr. Yashwant Javagi Dabir (Bombay). As a result of these labours there are now in India 283 societies affiliated to the Association. There is hardly a town of any importance where some organization for the furtherance of Temperance principles does not exist. The societies are encouraged to hold regular meetings, to translate suitable Temperance tracts and articles from our quarterly journal "Abkari" into the vernaculars, to visit the sur-

rounding villages, to submit memorials to Government against the opening of liquor shops, and generally to foster the growth of a sound Temperance sentiment among the people.

The progrees of the movement would undoubtedly have been much more marked had it not been for the recurrent famines which have devastated India. These dire calamities have naturally diverted the attention of those influential workers to whom we have to look for the effective prosecution of the Temperance cause; for it must be remembered that the men who are taking the lead in this great movement are also in the forefront of every effort that is being made for the social and moral amelioration of the people of India. But although the struggle against famine and plague has made great demands upon the time and labours of some of our best helpers, the more permanent conflict between sobriety and intemperance has not been neglected by them. On the contrary, they realise that it is from the impoverished peasants of India that the greater portion of the Indian Excise Revenue is drawn, and that this is the very class which first succumbs to the privations imposed upon them in these recurring periods of scarcity.

The Excise reports for the past year have not yet been issued and it is therefore not possible to arrive at any conclusion as to the effect which the latest famine will have upon the Excise returns. At the end of the previous famine, however, I made a careful study of these returns and I found that for the first time for many years there was a marked decline in the next Excise receipts for the two years which were affected by the famine. Taking the Central Provinces as an example, in 1894-95 the net receipts from Excise were Rs. 27,21,007 while in 1896-97 they fell to Rs. 20,55,696, a drop of nearly 7 lakhs, or about 25 per cent. The Excise Commissioner, in his report,

frankly attributed this falling off to famine; he wrote :—"In a famine year it is only natural that there should be a much smaller consumption by the public of Excise articles, and so the Revenue must fall." This was amply confirmed by reports from the districts. The Collector reported that the continued agricultural distress which made the liquor an unattainable luxury for the great bulk of the drinking class was the cause of the fall in receipts.

All this points to the melancholy conclusion that the customers of the liquor and drug shops of the Indian Government are mainly drawn from the very poorest strata of Indian society, that which falls at once into public relief at the first touch of famine. There can be no doubt that when the returns for the current year are issued this sad fact will be still further emphasised.

I invite the earnest attention of social reformers in India to the facts set forth above, and I appeal to them to lend their valuable aid to a movement which seeks to prevent their native land from falling under the baneful influence of a traffic which has wrought untold misery among the nations of the West, and which will, if not speedily checked, prove a no less potent instrument in the moral and social deterioration of the people of India.

IV.—The Hindu Woman : Our Sins against Her

By Dayaram Gidumal, Esq., B.A., LL.B., I.C.S.,
Judicial Commissioner, Sind.

Our society is unfortunately honey-combed with evils. Our moral sense is again so much atrophied that we hardly realize the sins we commit against those dearest and nearest to us. Do you think, my dear friends and brothren, I am exaggerating? Do you think we do not sin against woman from her birth nearly to her death? Can you deny that, owing to that sinning, women among us are ordinarily no better than "

Household stuff,
Live chattels, mincers of each other's fame
Full of weak poison, turnspits for the clown,
The drunkard's football, laughing-stocks of Time,
Whose brains are in their hands and in their heels,
But fit to darn, to knit, to wash, to cook,
To tramp, to scream, to burnish and to scour,
For ever slaves at home and fools abroad.

You will say they are not slaves, but my dear friends, what is the meaning of the Asura form of marriage? Is it not a fact that excepting a few upper classes, the rest treat woman as a chattel? Is her birth welcome to those who do not put a price upon her but have to pay large dowries? Is she not a marketable commodity among those to whom her birth is welcome? Look at the matter either way, and then say if you are just to your womankind.

Justice indeed! Why our little ones are barely a few days, or a few months old, when we inflict tortures—brutal tortures on them. Have you not seen little babies writhing and shrieking under the agony of the pins or needles passed through their tender ears and nose? From 16 to 18 holes are made, and I should like one of you to undergo the operation in order to realize the suffering of the little

ones—the future mothers of the nation. Have you not seen their tiny chests heaving and panting, their little breath coming and going—their young eyes—new yet to sky and earth—full of a quickening flood of tears with every prick of the torturing pin in the delicate lobes and cartilages? How tender women can stand such a sight passes one's understanding. We have Shakespeare's word for it that, even a philosopher cannot bear the tooth-ache patiently—and yet here are little mites of humanity subjected to the boring operation, in the teeth of the Penal Code, in the face of their very guardians and protectors, and no one heeds their cries. Is this humanity, my brothers? Is this civilization? Is this our manhood? Is this the glory of our education? But alas! those grey-haired sisters—I should say witch-sisters—Use and Wont—with the glass of hoary fashion in their hands, and the mould of obsolete form, have cast their spells over poor India to her grievous ruin. Their Medusa-eye has transfixed us with its stony stare, and petrified us into fossils—curious moral fossils—with a wonderful power of sinning against our own children!

This, however, is but the first Act of woman's tragedy. Sinning against her as a baby—do we cease to sin against her when she is no longer one? Do we not sin against her play-time? Do we not see the little one amusing herself in a way which is most pathetic? Is she taken out to fields carpeted with verdure? Can she tell the names of more than a few birds—of more than a few animals? Is she ever told what beauty God has given to the stars above her—and to the works of Nature around her? What is her outlook? What is the horizon of her little vision? Is she not "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in" to the four walls of her little house—often with no play-mate at all—often with all play tabooed? There is hardly any play-time indeed for most of our girls, and that means

loss of joyousness, and alas! often loss of health. It has been said that, "lovely human play is like the play of the Sun.........See, how he plays in the morning, with the mists below, and the clouds above, with a ray here, and a flash there, and a shower of jewels everywhere; that is the Sun's play; and great human play is like his—all various—all full of light and life, and tender as the dew of the morning." Do you provide such play for your girls? Do you even provide one-half as good—or indeed any play at all?

The child grows, and one would think it is time to send her to school. But do we send her there? What is the total number of our school-girls? And is it not a fact that even those who attend—attend, because their schooling costs nothing? Let a fiat go forth that every school girl must pay a poor anna as a fee per month, and the schools will be empty to-morrow. But let a fiat go forth that every boy is to pay double the fee he now pays, and the boys' schools will remain on the whole as full as before. Why is this? Why is it that a girls' school must not only give teaching gratis—but provide even books, slates and pens for the little scholars? Why is it that you do not spend a pie on your daughter's education? Have our girls no souls? Has a girl no eyes or ears, no hands or feet—no "organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions"? Can she not be "noble in reason, infinite in faculty, in form and moving express and admirable—in action like an angel—in apprehension like a god—the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals?" Have we had no Sāvitris and Sitas—no Dayamantis and Draupadis—no Gargis and Maitreyis? Can we rise in the scale of nations, if our women do not rise? Do you not know that,

> "The woman's cause is man's: they rise or sink,
> Together, dwarf'd or god-like, bond or free."

If you do—why is it that you make no sacrifice for her

education at all? Is this creditable to you? Do you not know that this whole universe would have lain buried in the abysmal profound of nonentity—if there had not been a primeval sacrifice? If you believe in the Upanishads and in the Gita, you ought to believe in sacrifice. The greatest poet of this century, who was also a seer, tells you:

> "No sacrifice to heaven—no help from heaven.
> That runs thro' all the faiths of all the world."

But, alas! we the descendants of those who believe the whole of life to be a result of God's own sacrifice, we the descendants of those, who saw God in everything—and whose whole span of years in this world was a Yagna—we know so little of sacrifice that we cannot even spare an anna a month for our girls' tuition!

But is this all? Do our sins stop here? I wish they did. But one of the blackest of our sins is yoking our little child to a husband before her school-time is over—nay sometimes even before her poor playtime is over. When in Gujarat I was told by a Sub-Judge of a widow, and what do you think was her age? Why—a year and a half! All our people have not yet sunk to that depth of demoralization. But is it not a fact that we marry our children too early, and the result is often a breakdown of the constitution—followed by disease—by domestic fret and fever—division and discord, and even by the supersession of the poor wife? Is it not a fact that the very women we would save have so utterly degenerated that they press for the continuance of the cause of their degeneration? Even a man like Telang could not resist such pressure, and I am afraid, even Keshub Chunder Sen was in part a victim to that kind of pressure. But who is responsible for all this ignorance—for all this degeneration? When the war between the North and the South broke out in America, did any one hold the slaves responsible for the continuance of slavery

—even though they sent up petitions after petitions that they wanted no interference with their lot and were well content with it? The crown of degeneration, believe me, is always complete ignorance of that fatal state, the crown of slavery is the feeling that there is no enslavement at all. We hardly know—at least we hardly realize, that the violation of physiological laws is a sin. Indeed we have become so enslaved to that sin that we are utterly unconscious of the rottenness it has spread in ourselves and in our society. Keshub Chunder Sen collected the opinions of eminent experts on this very question, but we are wiser than those experts! We seek the opinions of doctors in our Courts of Law and act upon them—but why should not we ignore them when our own children are concerned? Can a doctor tell us what is the proper age for marriage—though his opinion may be of value in questions of life and death? No; certainly, all doctors, all experts are fools, when they tell us there is a vast difference between pubescence and puberty—that what is called a sign of puberty is merely a sign of pubescence—that the reflex action of early marriage leads to premature sickly development—that such development means not seldom death in child-birth and, generally, unhealthy progeny and, always, a stunted life. Let us continue to defy the advice of experts—let us continue to make martyrs of our little ones and then protest that we do not sin at all! But if there is a God in heaven—believe me—no real sin, whether you acknowledge it or not, ever goes unpunished; and even now we are paying the penalty in the paralysis that has siezed both our common sense and our moral sense on this point, and in the continual degeneration of the race apparent to everyone but ourselves.

Let us now pass to the fifth Act of woman's tragedy—the Act in which she is called upon to play the part of a daughter-in-law. Torturing her in her infancy—curtailing her play-time—curtailing her schooling—saddling her too

early with the duties of a wife—you must needs also hand her over to the tender mercies of a mother-in-law. And what a life is it? Can you tell me how many waking hours you actually spend with your wife? Do you make up to her for all she suffers at the hand of an unsympathising mother in law? Do you even spare as much time for her as for your cow or for your horse? You have all sorts of resources.—What has she? You can improve yourselves in a thousand ways. You can learn what may profit your soul. —But what can she learn? Here is Mrs. Annie Besant lecturing to you about the doctrines of the Vedas. But though Mrs. Besant is welcome to read, mark and digest those Scriptures--our women are supposed to be disqualified to even taste a little of their honey! Is not this a monstrous doctrine, my brethren? Do not lay the flattering unction to your souls that you are doing your duty to your women to the best of your lights? No! you are not. None of us is, so long as our women have no equal opportunities for intellectual, moral and spiritual culture, and are consigned to a domestic tyranny which fritters away all their energy in patient suffering. I know there are daughters-in-law who prove themselves a pest to their dear mothers-in-law, but on the whole you will agree with me that the mother-in-law has the best of it, and the daughter-in-law the worst, in Hindu homes. It is in our power to take out the sting from this sort of life—it is in our power to prevent no little pain by exerting all our natural influence, by sweet reasonableness, by loving remonstrance, by prudent and considerate interference. But our hearts have grown hard and callous, and we seldom realize the sufferings, silently borne in our homes, or lift our little finger to alleviate them. Is not this our fifth sin?

The sixth Act of this sinful tragic drama is early maternity. Ignoring the laws of sexual intercourse—ignoring the teachings of physiology—some of us used to

perpetrate what the law now punishes as a crime. But there are still violations of physical and moral laws, which are not treated as crimes, but which nevertheless bring their own punishment with them. We sin deeply against our women not only as wives and daughters-in-law, but as mothers of our children. There is a beautiful description in the Ramayana of the care Rama took of Sita, when she was in the condition which Englishmen call interesting, but which is not very interesting to us. Do we take such care of our wives? Do we even see that they have proper medical help when their terrible travail intensified by early marriage is upon them? It was only the other day that the lady doctor at Shikarpur told me that if she had her way, she would hang all the midwives in that city. Do you know how their bungling and blundering often entails permanent injury, and, in no few cases, diseases hard to cure? I requested several gentlemen at Shikarpur to get us Dais who might be properly trained in the Dufferin Hospital. But though promises have been given to me from time to time, not one of them has been fulfilled. So much for our tenderheartedness! Again, woe unto the child-wife who gives birth to a daughter. A gentlemon told me the other day he was going to get his son married again because his daughter-in-law brought forth only children of her own sex. And he actually believed that the poor woman was responsible for the result! It is thus we add insult to injury—brutality to injustice! What hope is there for us, so long as one-half of our race is treated in this fashion? An English poet sings of a time when there will be

"Everywhere
Two heads in council, two beside the hearth,
Two in the tangled business of the world,
Two in the liberal offices of life,
Two plummets dropt for one to sound the abyss,
Of science, and the secrets of the mind."

But can we look forward to such a time in our own

land, when we have not yet learnt the barest rudiments of justice to our own wives, our daughters, our sisters, our mothers, and are ignorant of even our own ignorance ?

I come now to our seventh sin, the last Act of the tragedy, and the saddest. I mean the sorrows of widowhood. Lay your hands on your hearts, and say if you have done your duty by the widows in your community. I know that in some castes widow re marriage is allowed. But there are numerous others, in which it is not, and the condition of virgin-widows specially is deplorable. But I care not if you do not marry them, for marriage is not the sole end of a woman's existence. But if you do not marry them, give them at least some training which may make them useful members of society. Believe me, women care-less for physical pleasures than men. It is men that brutalize them by their sensuality. It is men who do not even respect the sanctity of the period of gestation or even the first few months of nursing time. It is men who impose their wills on their wives in sexual matters and place no restraints upon themselves. If women had their own way in these matters, they would follow the healthy instincts of nature, and their own ingrained modesty. Therefore let us not assume that woman is fit only to be a wife or widow. Even if you assume this, see that your widows become ministers of mercy, angels of grace. But alas! what have we done to them in the past? If we had but a little imagination, if we could transport ourselves to the bourne whence no traveller returns, if we could with our mind's eye see our own daughters as they are after their term of earthly toil and trouble, they would tell us: "Oh, father! I came to you a divine embryonic soul, I was a trust in your hands. You should have let my little soul grow and expand its wings and see the Father of all light and life. But you imprisoned me in my bodily shell, and you did nothing to help it to emerge thence into the sun-light

of God's beauty. There were no true pleasures for me, no pleasures of Memory, none of Imagination, none of Hope, none of Communion or Divine Vision. See my little unfledged, stunted, blindfolded soul. It is no better than it was. You have violated your trust, for you opened not the windows of my soul, and I have yet to grope in darkness and ignorance—darkness and ignorance that bring their own curse and that spread a blight on your future. Be wise to-day, and be more merciful to your own flesh and blood." But alas! we neither hear the still small voice in our own breasts, nor have faculties for seeing what we have made of woman in the past, and what we are likely to make of her in the future.

Emerson has a golden saying. He tells you "*Be and not seem—Be a gift and a benediction.*" Would we made every one of our daughters a gift and a benediction—would we ceased to *seem* and lived a true *life* and washed away our manifold sins against woman. We hurry her from her infancy—through physical tortures—through a joyless childhood, without opportunities for playing or learning, into the bonds of early matrimony—into the miseries of early widowhood. We sin against her as a baby—we sin against her play-time—we sin against her school-time—we sin against her as a wife, as a daughter-in-law, as a mother, as a widow. And what is more, we are hardly conscious of sinning—so benumbed has become our sense of duty—our sense of fair play—and even our common sense as to what is good for us and for our country. I do not want you to revolutionize your society, I do not ask you to introduce Western fashions and Western modes of life. But I do ask you to give up your apathy—to rouse yourself from your terrible lethargy, and do the barest justice to your women. Do not shut them out of the light—do not starve their intellects and their fine sympathies and imaginations and spiritual insight—give them a wider

sphere of usefulness, and greater opportunities for self-improvement, and above all for acquiring "Self-knowledge, Self-reverence, Self-control," and that true wisdom which makes life a Divine harmony: and, believe me they will not only become your help-mates, if not your better halves, but the curse of our seven sins may, by Divine grace, be removed, and God's blessing be once more upon us.

V.—The Hindu Joint Family System.

By G. Subramania Iyer, Esq., B.A.,

Late Editor of the "Hindu," Madras.

When we talk of Social Reform, we have social progress in view. If we do not care for progress, then no reform is needed, although without progress, stagnation and eventual decay are sure to set in. No healthy society can exist without constant and conscious endeavours towards a better condition. To be satisfied with existing conditions is to invite deterioration. That was the mistake that our ancestors made. When Hindu Society lost its virility and capacity for progress, its leaders adopted a policy of feeble compromise with every fresh environment that changing political and social conditions brought about. Compromise is, indeed, essential for smooth progress; but while it is adopted to overcome temporary difficulties, the ideal should ever be kept in view, and what remnant of evils compromise has left uncured, should again be combated until the ideal is reached. To approach the ideal, not to recede from it, should be the aim of every endeavour. For the time being the ideal may be too remote, and, judged from existing conditions, it may be impracticable. Still a rational ideal is always needful for a potent incentive and rightful guidance. Herbert Spencer truly says: "If amidst all those compromises which the circumstances of the times necessitate, or are thought to necessitate, there exists no true conception of better and worse in social organisation, if nothing beyond the exigencies of the moment are attended to, and the proximately best is habitually identified with the ultimately best, there cannot be any true progress. However distant may be the goal, and however often intervening obstacles may necessitate deviation in our course toward it, it is obviously requisite to know whereabout it lies." Nothing

can be more fatal to social well-being than the motto of "let alone." Many people are satisfied with the existing state of things. "Are we not sufficiently happy with our social institutions? There is unhappiness in every conceivable system of social organisation. Heaven knows that your so-called reform may make the last state worse than the first. Is it not wise, therefore, to let things alone?" Such an argument, it will be observed, is generally advanced by those who happen to enjoy more than their fair share of the good things of this world, or by ignorant men who are incapable of a conception of improvement. The former are actuated by extreme selfishness, and are entirely bereft of sympathy with those who are less fortunately placed than themselves, while the latter are only a step raised above the condition of brutes who are entirely guided by their instinct and by their wants of the moment. In fact a policy of "let alone" is impossible, because it soon sets at work the latent causes of deterioration. It assumes that the given social system is perfect, that its evils cannot be mitigated, and that persons who suffer from them are entitled to no redress. Though perfection is not attainable, there can be no limit to progress. We see in every part of the world statesmen, patriots, and philanthropists ceaselessly at work conceiving, concerting and carrying out measures for the amelioration of the condition of mankind.

There are those that admit the inevitability of change and progress, but are not satisfied with the direction in which they proceed. Many an intelligent Hindu has a longing for the reappearence of the times and of the social system depicted in the institutes of Manu, if not in the Vedic literature, when the community was divided into four castes based on birth, when the most intelligent class took little or no interest in the activities of life, but, being maintained at public expense, spent their life in sacrificial

rites or in secluded contemplation, when trade and industry were despised, and when the great bulk of the population were forced to be content with a lot of menial service rendered to the higher castes, without a chance or a hope of rising to higher standards of life. The mind that can conceive that such going backward is possible can be entitled to no respect. India can no more go back to that primitive state than the great British Nation can go back to the age of the Druids. I do not know how these people imagine that the stupendous achievements of human heroism, intelligence, religion and science, during these four thousand years, for the development of man and human society, can be effaced. Even if, by some miracle, all the forces that drag society forward along lines of progress, and are bound to grow in number and strength as the modern system of international relations deepens the interdependence of nations, and by overcoming the obstacles arising from distance and time, tends to raise the condition of the various nationalities to a uniform standard, are destroyed, and Hindu Society is revived in all its primitive glory, how is it proposed to save it from the decay and ruin that seized it in ancient times? The Vedic social system was tried and did not succeed. A resuscitation of the ancient institutions of Hindu Society is impossible unless a huge PRALAYA or deluge sweeps over the whole world destroying all existing nations, and man starts his career afresh from a primitive state. Such an assumption is too grotesque to be seriously entertained. In fact, it may be laid down as a principle of social evolution, that no extinct institution can be revived in its identical shape, without adaptations to suit the change in the environment which time in its efflux ceaselessly effects.

Human mind, in its constant onward progress, acquires fresh truths as the result of its natural development and organic growth and will not relinquish them. The child,

in its innocence and lack of responsibility, is indeed much happier than the adult, it is more beautiful, blithesome and gay; the man, the grandfather, may yearn for the pleasures of childhood, but if they are once past, they are past for ever, and no effort of the will can recall them. We can strike a man dead, but it is beyond our power to make him again the pretty, merry, happy child of his earliest years. In the same way it is impossible to make the men of to-day, the men of two thousand years ago. All our knowledge, all our enlightenment has come to humanity in the course of its natural development, and as the result of its internal vital energies. To attempt to oppose the operation of these elementary forces is as objectless and fruitless a task as to attempt to prevent the earth from revolving on its axis.

Progress consists therefore in moving forward and not backward; and any attempt to move backward on our part while the rest of the world moves forward will only end in disastrous ruin. No nation in modern times can persist in an independent career not in harmony with the movement of the stronger and more forward races. The strongest nations of the world have in their hand the moulding of the destinies of the weaker nations, and where the Western nations lead, the Eastern nations must follow; and if they do not, ruin will seize them. India is being dragged by England in the tail of her onward career; but China, Japan, Persia, Turkey and Egypt—what does the present state of these countries illustrate? Japan would have fallen a prey to the disease germs that, imbedded in her own social system, were eating into her vitals, or would have been swallowed up by Russia, if a great revolution had not so changed her social and political system as to bring her institutions and her own ideals into harmony with those of Europe. And what is the fate of China, which persists in the preservation of her antiquated civilization refusing to

fall in with the ideals of the leading nations of the world? The modern history of Turkey, Egypt and Persia teaches the same lesson, the lesson, namely, that either submission to the Western forces or ruin is the alternative open to what the Marquis of Salisbury, described as the dying nations of the world.

Selection and competition, or the survival of the fittest, is the law that determines progress in nature. It is no less applicable to human society than to animals and plants. In an organised society individuals who are superior to their fellows in some respects assert this superiority, and continuing to assert this superiority, they promulgate it as an inheritance to their successors; this is how progress is originated and maintained. And what holds good in regard to a single society holds good in regard to the community of nations. The marvellous inventions of modern science having annihilated time and distance, the remotest parts of the world are brought into touch with one another, and the stronger communities constantly exert their influence and assert their superiority over any community which by its weakness is exposed to foreign influence. No nation can develop its destiny in these days independently of the influence of other nations. Exclusiveness or isolation is impossible without producing disastrous results. In fact, no exclusiveness or isolation is allowed, because the aggressive tendency of the more forward and progressive nations constantly seeks openings for the exercise of their energy and the employment of their resources. For purposes of trade, for the employment of their capital, for the settlement of their surplus population, for political convenience, or for the mere glory of territorial aggrandizement, they establish their ascendency in strange countries, add to their spheres of influence, and thrust their articles of industry. There is no longer a single corner in this wide world which is safe against the encroachment of the manly races of the

West. What is taking place now has always taken place since the beginning of the world—ceaseless and inevitable selection and rejection, ceaseless and inevitable progress. The history of the world, ever since history began to be made, contains numerous instances of kingdoms and empires which, being unable to stand this stress and storm of the world's competition, fell back and disappeared. As we trace the growth, decline and disappearance of the great powers of antiquity, the Babylonian, Assyrian and Persian Empires, as well as the history of the later organisations, the Greek States and the Roman Empire, we perceive the operation of the same law. Our own country has not been free from the results of the same conditions of struggle and success in its long history of an endless succession of vicissitudes. "In the flux and change of life," says Benjamin Kidd, "the members of those groups of men which in favourable conditions first showed any tendency to social organisations, become possessed of a great advantage over their fellows, and these societies grow up simply because they possessed elements of strength which led to the disappearence before them of other groups of men with which they came into competition. Such societies continued to flourish until they in their turn had to give way before other associations of men of higher social efficiency." An intelligent student of the history of our country can call to his mind stages in the career of our race illustrative of this important truth.

The progress of the Western nations, more especially of the Anglo-Saxon race, marks the lines on which the progress of our own country should be directed. The Hindu civilization based on the ancient Aryan institutions is doomed. The cycle of human evolution which it dominated is past and, in the fresh cycle that has succeeded, the Western races lead the progress. The only civilization that is destined to and will eventually dominate the world is

what the Anglo-Saxon race will direct. There is no part of the world where the British nation, the Germans or the Americans do not exercise a dominant influence. To India, for special reasons, no other progress is possible. India cannot hope to dispense with all those appliances of modern life which Western science has placed at the disposal of man ; she cannot escape from the influence of Western thought ; she cannot help imitating the institutions and assimilating the ideals of the West ; any resistance to such influence will only throw back her progress and render her more unfit to carry on the struggle for existence, which, as we have pointed out, is the condition that marks the life of man as well as other races in nature. India lost all vitality and force necessary to pursue an independent career of progress more than two thousand years ago, when she first began to shake at the repeated knocks of foreign invaders at her doors. She at length succumbed to the superior force of the Mahomedans who ruled over her for over six centuries and whose civilization she adopted in many respects. But the decline and overthrow of the Mahomedan power and the establishment of British domination in its place illustrates the law of social evolution. We have been laying stress upon the law of the rejection of the weak and the success of the strong in the ceaseless war of competition and struggle that the human races are waging. For a short time the Hindu race appeared as if it would muster her latent powers and win independence. But the event proved that, like the Chinese, the Indian race had become too antiquated for modern conditions of success, and as in the physical fight between nations, bows and arrows and wooden guns are out of date, so in what may be called the moral fight between nations, the old Hindu institutions constituting their social and political system were too old and effete to stand the crushing onslaught of the Western forces. And

it is only too obvious that the indigenous institutions that served their purpose well enough when India was the mistress of the world and feared no attack from outside will prove increasingly feeble and unsuited to stand or resist the pressure of the younger and more vigorous nations who press forward with facilities and aids which the latest inventions of human mind to enhance the effects of physical as well as moral effort, place at their disposal.

This is the standpoint from which we are called upon to examine our institutions, the standpoint, namely, how these institutions can be so modified or reformed that they may be most serviceable and helpful, in holding our own, in preventing further deterioration, if not in achieving fresh progress, amidst the ceaseless rush, jostle and conflict going on in the arena of this wide world. Social institutions must work by promoting individual freedom and stimulating the capacity for corporate action. There can be no national progress where these two qualities are wanting. Under a social or political system which takes away liberty and independence from the individual and gives him no scope or inducement to work for the good of his neighbours and his country at large, no progess can be possible. This is the basis of the contrast between the nations of the West and the nations of the East. Even among the nations of the West, their growth or decadence has been exactly as this great quality was fostered or crushed by Society and the State. No other fact in the history of nations is more prominent than that the tyranny of society, of priests and of rulers has proved the most effective weapon to kill the latent forces making for the development of men and the growth of the nation. The Hindu race has suffered less from the tyranny of their rulers than from the oppression and selfish greed of their priestly class, who were also their legislators and leaders of thought. There is absolutely no other instance of a naturally gifted race, intelligent, indus-

trious, and docile, capable of high developments, which has been kept down and degraded by a unique system of organised priestcraft. The social institutions of the Hindus which are the embodiments of the wisdom, the self-seeking wisdom, of the priests, have produced the same melancholy effect by killing all individual freedom and crippling the best faculties of the human mind. There is no other country in the world where caste and custom have greater influence than India; and where every incentive to action and every ideal are judged with reference to the dictates of these two worst of tyrants. The Hindu has not lost the subtlety of his mind, but he can no longer boast of originality, enterprise, or self-reliance. Supposing a highly educated Hindu and an Englishman of ordinary intelligence are both taken to a distant, strange land and there left to shift for themselves, we have no doubt but that the Hindu will find himself helpless and unable to get on, while the Englishman by his pluck and energy will soon win his way to a position of respectability and affluence. The Anglo-Saxon will work hard, grapple boldly with his difficulties, and successfully rough it out in the end. The success that he is winning everywhere in the world, the ascendancy he establishes wherever he goes, his wonderful enterprises and huge accumulation of wealth are due mostly to the individual freedom he enjoys in his native country. This is the secret of the wonderful dominance that England enjoys among the nations of the world, while other countries like Spain, Portugal, Austria and Italy have fallen back in the race and acknowledge the lead of their more masterful neighbours. The tendency of all progressive nations is to allow the fullest scope for the free expansion of the latent powers of the individual and the fullest liberty for him to follow wherever his powers lead him. With the extinction of feudalism and the military type of Society, the slow emancipation of the masses commenced,

and in modern times, it is not only the political emancipation of the individuals of the humblest lot in society that is aimed at, but also to give to them along with the most favoured classes equal opportunities for general advancement.

Not only is personal freedom a great factor in national progress ; but a capacity for joint action either in the interest of a body of individuals or in the interest of the community at large is also important for a successful national life. The great qualities that distinguish man from the inferior animals are his reason and his sociability, and these two attributes impose on him the double obligation of improving himself and improving in co-operation with others the community of which he is a member. In the primitive stages of society, man thinks more of his own individual interests than those of his society, and considers these latter as necessarily hostile to or incompatible with his interests as an individual. Bnt as Society reaches higher stages of development, the interdependence of its various members and classes deepens, and man learns to consider the joint interests of society as well as his own, until at length a condition is reached when his development as a separate individual is less important than his development as a member of society. At first man under his selfish impulses refuses to recognise an obligation in serving the interests of others, but as the complexity of the social structure increases, he learns to identify the interests of the community with his own, and realises his duty to his nation as well as to himself. Where the interest of the individual and of society clash, it is now recognized in all civilized countries that the former must be subordinated to the latter. The late Mr. C. H. Pearson, the author of that remarkable book, "National Life and Character," attributes the downfall of the Roman Empire to the fact that there was no sense of national life in the commu-

nity. "Unless the general feeling in a people," he says, "is to regard individual existence and fortunes as of no practical account in comparison with the existence and self-respect of the body politic, the disintegrating forces of time will always be stronger in the long run than any given organization." What great part this feeling of self-effacement in the service of the best interests of the body politic, patriotism, in other words, has played in the history of nations, we need not say. The latest instance is the marvellous heroism that the small Dutch community of South Africa has shown in its death-grapple with the British nation with its gigantic resources. In fact, devotion to the State as the embodiment of the collective interests of the nation, is becoming in all civilized countries an article of faith almost as binding as a religious duty. Even more than a citizen's duty to his religious faith is his duty to his country regarded as binding. Mr. Chamberlain places patriotism before politics; but amongst the obligations of a citizen, patriotism is before his religion even. Supposing England happens to be involved in a war in defence of Protestantism against the machinations of the Pope and his Roman Catholic lieges, we are not sure that the Marquis of Ripon or the late Marquis of Bute will fight against his mother land for the sake of the faith he professes. It is said that in the American War of Liberation, a Southern General by name Stonewall Jackson, was a believer in State rights but was no believer in slavery. He found it impossible to dissever the two causes and he elected to fight for the good of the State, which he clearly apprehended, against the abstract and transcendental rights of humanity. The paramount duty of the citizen to make every possible sacrifice for the protection and honour and general well-being of the State is recognised by the modern practice of compelling every able-bodied adult male to serve in the army for a limited period of time.

This sacrifice is demanded solely on the ground that in national existence the requirements of the State are paramount over those of the individual, and it is by no means unreasonable to suppose that this obligation will be extended to other spheres of national duty than bearing arms in the defence of the father land. Nor is this devotion to the State and the sacrifice in its interest a mere sentiment such as were the devotion and sacrifice which people used to make for the sovereign in the middle ages; because, in these days the State undertakes to do many things for the citizen on whom it confers material and moral benefits of the highest value. Besides, the best thoughts and deeds of a country are the most cherished inheritance of its people from generation to generation till the end of history. "The religion of the State," says Mr. Pearson, "is surely worthy of reverence as any creed of the Churches, and ought to grow in intensity from year to year."

It is the desire of all Indians whose minds have been cultured by education and whose sympathies broadened by experience and reflection, that this feeling of patriotism, this devotion to the common cause of the country, in preference to more limited interests, should be fostered and strengthened as much as they are in other modern States. We can easily imagine what would have been the condition of Europe and of America if this feeling had not been woven into the very nature of the people by example and practice, in the long course of centuries; and our own country will make but little progress as long as our people remain strangers to this noble feeling which has been the cause of the highest achievements of heroism and self-sacrifice in other parts of the world. If is of course absurd to separate the well-being of the individual from the well-being of the community; each necessarily acts and reacts on the other. But while certain individual interests claim the first consideration, the interests of the State or the community at

large should be the second. Between the individual and the State no third interest should intervene. Though a strong, intelligent and well educated individual is better able to serve his country than a sickly dullard, still in preference to the service of the country no claim on the resources, moral, material or physical, of any citizen can be recognized. The poor and the sick and other disabled members of a community have a claim on the personal service and on the possessions of those who are in more favoured circumstances, but they have this claim not as individuals apart from their relation to society, but as its constituent units whose well-being contributes to the well-being of society as a whole. The so-called family is no exception to this general principle.

The reader who has had the patience to follow me thus far, will now see the bearing of the foregoing remarks on the subject of this essay. We shall now proceed to consider how far the Hindu joint family system is capable of helping the Hindu community in its progress, as it has to progress under the modern conditions of close competition led by the powerful and highly developed nations of the West; how far this peculiar system of the Hindus is calculated to promote individual freedom and the capacity for joint co-operative effort—the two tests which, as we have said, every institution in a healthy state of society should satisfy. If it is incapable of doing one or the other, then it is obviously the duty of every true lover of his country to favour and work for its gradual adaptation to the new environments of society. It would not be wise to prop it up by artificial supports and try to maintain it intact against the disintegrating forces constantly at work to undermine it and bring about its collapse. It is altogether a false sentiment which exaggerates the virtues of an obsolescent institution and retards natural progress. Ordinary persons cannot get over the influence of

their emotional attachment to ancient institutions of which alone they have any knowledge and amidst which they have been brought up. Their emotion warps their judgment and their suspicion that the change is being pressed by Western influence, by the influence of an alien race, of a different religious faith, enhances their attachment to indigenous institutions as well as their aversion to change. The bias of patriotism, the bias of religion and the bias of education—all tend to blind the judgment and make a due appreciation difficult of the change in the general conditions of society which calls for a concurrent adaptation of the institutions on which social stability rests. Their love of ancient institutions is exactly like the love of a fond mother for her children in spite of their defects of which the neighbour complains almost every day.

All social institutions can more or less claim the merit of antiquity; but while in progressive communities they constantly undergo transformation, in a fossilised social state such as ours they remain as they were centuries ago. The Hindu joint family system had continued to remain, until the leavening influence of British rule began to impart a general shake to the whole social system of the Hindus. Most of the progressive nations of the world, especially those which have a common ethnological origin, start with more or less kindred institutions, but while one nation moves quickly and changes its institutions, others remain stationary and its institutions become more or less stereotyped. Between the institution of ancient Brahminic family, and the institution of family in the early societies of a kindred origin, a striking analogy is found. A Hindu "kutumba" or family consisted in ancient times in a large group of persons, living within one enclosure, ordinarily taking their meals together, having a common fund and a common means of support, owning extensive landed pro-

perty, with herds and cattle, and probably slaves, before slavery was abolished by British government;—having probably a common family idol whose worship was carried on out of the common funds, and performing the annual and occasional religious ceremonies in honor of their departed ancestors.* The Hindu joint families were only a reproduction of ancient patriarchal groups of which the chief characteristics were the supremacy of the eldest male, the agnatic kinship and the resulting law of inheritance; and ancestor worship; and the Hindu patriarchal group had the special characteristic of the exclusion of females from inheritance. It is this patriarchal group that gradually developed into the joint family system. "The modern Hindu community" says Mr. Bhattacharya, "is mainly a constitution and expansion of the eight original gotras or patriarchal group that came over to India from the regions which lie in the north-west of our country across the mountain chain which separates it therefrom. The *gotras* were absolutely homogeneous, excepting probably the slave element. The members of these *gotras* gradually supplanted the Dasya race, and in the course of these struggles, themselves divided into a number of class divisions known as castes. When they had given up their nomadic life, they settled in agricultural communities, characterised by all those attributes, which distinguish such groups in other parts of the world. These assemblages, known as the 'pugas,' or village communities, gradually disappeared, or lost all their essential traits, by operation partly of an inherent principle of decay, partly also by the disintegrating effect the Brahminic religion had upon them. Throughout the whole career of these social groups so originated in the ancient *gotras*, the principal early traces were never altogether cast off,—the supremacy of the eldest, the

* Krishna Kamal Bhattacharya on the law relating to the Joint Hindu Family.

emale exclusion, the ancestor worship, having been either ept in remembrance, or partially followed in practice; hile the most characteristic feature of the *gotra* group, the oint possession of all the property, has retained its priitive vitality down to our own days,—the result of this emarkable vitality being the undivided family of the modern Hindu Law." That the Khatriyas and the Vaisyas are not the lineal descendants of these eight gotras is a notion which Mr. Bhattacharya discards. "The notion was evidently generated by the immensely developed arrogance of the Indian priestly class—instances of this arrogance being met with in almost every page of the writings promulgated by them from the age of Manu. We must suppose that these *gotras*, or cattle tending pastural groups, at whose head probably stood the renowned eight Rishis, Vasishta and others, included not only the ancestors of modern Brahmins, but also the ancient progenitors of all the genuine Aryan Kshatriyas and Vaisyas."

Thus the present Hindu joint family system represents a primitive institution which was common to many races and nationalities, and had its origin in the necessities of a remote age when the protection of person and property and reparation for injuries suffered did not form the duty of an organised central authority which was obeyed by all individuals and groups of individuals, but devolved more or less on the individual or individuals interested in the vindication of justice according to the sense of the time. In fact, each family was a state in itself, and the powerful opposition which the first Aryan settlers in India experienced from the aboriginal inhabitants made it necessary that the family should embrace as many persons as could be kept together. This explains the absolute authority vested in the eldest member of the family and the exclusion of women from inheritance. At one time, in many parts of the world, the tribe, the city, the guild claimed

the absolute disposal of the person and life of individuals; and there was also the military type of society where all functionaries, authorities and powers, whether Civil or Military, were regimented and disposed as in an army, and where the individual was a mere cog in a piece of mechanism, and of but secondary importance. For similar reasons, the unsettled state of society made the family a state within state, of which the head possessed absolute power over the lives and liberties of all the other members. The improvement of the joint property was another cause of the maintenance of large families. Some of our ancient Rishis recommend living in joint families, because "united, they are likely to attain a flourishing state," through mutual assistance in the acquisition of wealth as well as through mutual protection against external danger. The organization of the family had, to fulfil its purpose, to be very compact and subject to extreme discipline. So, the father had the right to dispose of his children in any way he liked. The father could give away, sell away or abandon his son. The family was also liable to make amends for the injury caused by any of its members. It administered justice within its own limits, although the decision of the family was liable to revision by higher tribunals. The state of Europe in ancient times in this respect was certainly worse. Over the children of the family the right of the head had absolutely no limit. Children were freely exposed in the old Greek and Roman world and among the Norseman. In the case of the wife or of children who had been acknowledged, the father had the rights of a Magistrate, that is, though he could not legitimately put to death, except for a grave and sufficient cause, there was no recognised tribunal to which an appeal from his sentence would lie. The father's right over the person and property was also absolute. The husband could lend his wife to a friend, as well as choose a wife for his son or a husband

for his daughter. Neither wife nor children could possess property. The husband could adopt a stranger to share his children's inheritance. So late as the thirteenth century the Church Courts in England ruled that a husband could transfer his wife for another man for a limited period. The right of selling a ward's marriage was among the most profitable incidents of feudal tenure. A girl of seven years could be betrothed in Medieval England, and as down to a later time the marriages of mere children were still common, the parental authority in regard to marriage was practically absolute ; and to marry without the consent of the parents was regarded as an outrage on decency. But in Europe all these have changed. The right of the father over the lives of his children and the right of the husband over the life of his wife are now practically obsolete. In India, though reform has not gone so far as in Europe, still British rule has divested the Hindu joint family system of its grosser barbarities. The father can still hand over his son to another family for adoption, can keep his children ignorant, can choose a husband or wife for them ; he can similarly consign his wife to a subordinate status in society as well as in the family, can ill-treat her, deny her the pleasures and comforts and the education which the male members of the family can claim. The spirit of the West has not touched and transformed the whole, but it may yet accomplish this and bring our family system into harmony with the new conditions introduced by our contact with the West.

The Hindu joint family is different from what is understood by family in other countries. Western countries have discarded all that represented the characteristics of barbarous times—the need of defence against enemies, the obligation of a common family worship, and the pledges for good behaviour exacted by the State. But there still remains the family consisting of the husband, the wife and the

children who are not adults. The European family is established in pursuance of the natural instinct implanted in the human mind for the union of the sexes and the perpetuation of the species. Though the present Hindu joint family has survived its medieval characteristics, and is no longer organised on a large numerical basis for purposes of self-protection, &c., still it brings together under the roof of a common *pater familias* a number of persons who have no legal or moral claim on his support. It is impossible that a family, consisting of a number of distant relations with absolutely no interest in the happiness of the union between the master and the mistress or in the proper bringing up of the children, can be permeated by the same feeling of affection and reverence and bound by the same ties as a family which is based on the universal instinct of the animal nature, the attraction between the two sexes, and through their union the perpetuation and sustained progress of the species. Working through the great law of heredity the family founded on the love between man and woman tends to bring into existence a series of generations, the succeeding generation being better than the preceding one in physique, in intelligence and in morality. At all events, this ought to be the case in a healthy society. Western sayings like "the nation is made in the cradle," "the moral man can only be formed on th mother's knee," "the position of women in a society is t best test of its civilization"—indicate the serious and no cor[ception o]f the family in the West. A keen sense of honour of the family has often been the incentive to noblest acts of heroism and self-denial; and besides, o things being equal, the member of family whose l ancestors have been brave men and pure women, with a better chance of a blameless life than the child best hope is that its family record may not be remer against it. No democratic prejudice against social

tions can extinguish the pride of descent. The value of family feeling is however more based upon forethought for the future than on a sensibility to the past. "Whatever else science teaches us," writes Mr. Pearson, * "it teaches that the family with its inherited taints of greed or lust, its quick impulses or cautious movements, its sublimated or impaired brain power, *its* noble or sordid proclivities, is the one indestructible factor in human society. We may destroy its vantage ground of privilege and consideration, but however debilitated, it will remain. No change affecting it can be other than far reaching. The man who has not shrunk from dishonoring his ancestors has often recoiled from the prospect of bringing infamy upon his children. In proportion as family bonds are weakened, as the tie uniting husband and wife is more and more capricious, as the relations of the children to the parent become more and more temporary, will the religion of the household life gradually disappear." What the future of the family system of Europe will be, it is not our object here to consider. "May it be," says this writer, "that as husband and wife, parent and children, master and servant, family and home lose more and more of their ancient and intense significance, the old imperfect feelings will be transmitted into love for fatherland." May it be or may it not be. The Hindu family system has not reached a stage of its refinement when similar doubts come within the range of practical sociology. But it is certain that it will soon survive its present crude stage and take that constitution ... that spirit which will make the family a ... factor in society instead of the drag and clog that ... present. Man's part in the social economy is that ... bread-winner, the defender of the living generation, ... part is that of the preserver and improver of the ... generation. But the drones and idle hangers-on

* National Life and Character.

have no part whatever, their only claim is to be rejected and left to suffer the consequence of their revolt against nature which requires a constant exercise of all faculties in view to progress and life, with the penalty of death for default.

Thus the Hindu family system and that of other nations differ in character and aim. The European family is based on the sovereignty of woman who is the true fountain of all national greatness, whereas the Hindu system still keeps its old distinctive feature, being an organization chiefly for the building up of common property. The family organization has no longer to defend itself against outside aggression, nor is it kept together for common ancestor worship. Its only object at present is to provide for the maintenance of a number of persons connected together by some sort of relationship. It is not only the support of the old parents and brothers that it undertakes, but also that of sisters, cousins and other destitute relations. The object was in a measure easily attained in former times, when all the members could live together under the same roof, deriving their livelihood from the common lande[d] property. Instances were not uncommon until a few yea[rs] ago when a single family consisted of nearly one hundr[ed] persons, men, women, children and servants. But in p[ro]portion as the livelihood of the family ceases to be deri[ved] from land alone and is derived from other occupation[s as] well, this unwieldy constitution of the family is bound [to be] shaken. The upper classes of Hindus now largely fill [the] public service, learned professions, and the occupatio[ns of] trade and commerce, and it is obvious that such p[ersons] cannot live together in the same place or that the ear[nings] of different members cannot be thrown together into a [com]mon stock for common support. The father is sep[arated] from the son, brother from brother, uncle from nephe[w and] so on, each living in a place to which his avocatio[n]

This necessity of modern times is a great blow to the ol constitution and spirit of the joint family. Where th different members of the family live together in the sam house, the elder male members exercise more influence or the younger ones, and the distinction between the workin man and the idler, the clever man and the dullard, the old an the young, is less observed, and the women of the famil are consigned to a common position of subordination to al the adult male members. But when the joint family is scattered into different groups in distant places, each group becomes a family in itself, more simple and rational in it constitution and spirit, though the obligations of their join nature are more or less respected. In the present transitio state, the Hindu joint family system is less antagonistic to he dignity of woman, and to the freedom of the individual, and more calculated to keep out the drones.

How the evils of the Hindu joint family system strik a sympathetic outsider disposed to be lenient to our fault and actuated by a most genuine sympathy for the well eing of the Hindu nation, will be seen from the opinions hich Mr. H. J. S. Cotton, now Chief Commissioner of ssam, expressed nearly twenty years ago. The climate of lia is enervating, while the simple wants of the people n be easily supplied, and there is a tendency, in conse- ence, among the great mass of the population to lead an life, to eke out a livelihood by begging, or to support nselves at the great expense of their charitable relations ighbours. This system has given rise to a large class population in India, and is producing incalculable progress. "It is this state of things," Mr. H. J. S. n says, "which I condemn as a bad one. It is de- to encourage among individuals not only a sense of liance, but a desire to be independent, and a feeling e in receiving support from the charity or labour of without the return of any corresponding equivalent.

It is only the sick and infirm, women and children, and, for special reasons, the priesthood,* who are rightly supported by the labour or others.

The able-bodied man must work, and the necessity of work is a principle, which above all others, requires to be implanted in the mind of the oriental, whose home is in a hemisphere where the bounty of nature seems almost to remove every physical stimulus to exertion. The dignity of labour is a faint glimmering light even in Western Europe; but in India such an idea is not only unknown but repellent, and it is considered disgraceful in a man to work for his livelihood by the labour of his hands. Therefore, I believe that in India any system of social life which indirectly or directly may be said to afford encouragement to sloth is injurious, and that we should do our best to modify or eradicate it."

I am not discussing, in this paper, the subject of our joint family system in regard to the law relating to the rights of its constituent members, but am considering the wider aspect of its effect on the general well-being of society. Still the one not being separable from the other, the discussion which Sir V. Bashyam Iyengar's Bill on "the Hindu Gains of Learning" raised in Southern India, throws a good deal of light on the general evils of the present state of the Hindu family. Though the discussion was confined to the more educated classes among Hindus, still a few of them, true to the conservative instinct of the race, expressed themselves against the proposed legislation. But the majority of those that were consulted on the desirability of legislation to protect the earnings of a member of a joint family from wanton claims urged by the drones were in favour of such protection being granted, and pointed out some of the more flagrant evils of the existing system. I shall quote here the opinions of two Hindu gentle-

* Mr. H. J. S. Cotton is a follower of Comte.

men, who, by virtue of the position they hold, may be said to be misled by no fads or theories, but to take a practical view of the question. Dewan Bahadur Srinivasaraghava Iyengar, who has been the chief minister of the Native State of Baroda for over five years, says: "What generally happens in Hindu families is this: So long as the earning member lives there is seldom any trouble; the other members look to him for protection and know that, if they put any pressure upon him, it is open to him to separate himself from the family and thus cut off their supplies. When he separates himself of his own accord he generally makes, out of his self-acquisitions, provision for the other members to the extent of his means, though he does not feel bound to consider his cousins, nephews, and other distant relations as being on the same footing as his own children whose interests have naturally the first claims on him. It is when he dies leaving a widow, more or less helpless, and young children, more especially girls, that the troubles commence, leading to much fraud and waste of property. The proposed legislation will effectually put a stop to these evils and be of great benefit to the country." Sir K. Seshadri Iyer, the veteran minister of Mysore, says: "He (the earning member) would, in most cases, be found most willing and ready to assist his poor relations if the matter were left to his own good sense, natural affection, and desire to win public esteem. On the other hand, to the man who is dead to the dictates of natural affection and the duties enjoined by the opinion of society, there is already, under the existing system, a ready means of escape, as he has only to take the precaution of having a division of family property effected when there appears a prospect of his attaining to wealth. The real sufferer, under the existing system, therefore, is the educated earning man having a respect for the opinion of society and natural affection for his brothers and more distant kindred, who

nesitates to resort to a division of family property, an ex-
treme measure which is distasteful to every Hindu as it involves a severance from the rest of his family and renders him, for all practical purposes, including those of religious ceremonial, an absolute stranger to them." Sir V. Bashyam Iyengar himself stated that "the personal law of a nation its bearing on domestic and family relations, should be ch as to ensure honesty and fair dealing at home, but if e law, owing to its obscurity and uncertainty or any fault erein, is such that honesty does not begin at home, the oner it is changed, the better will it be for the develop-ent of the character of the nation as citizens." Thus the sent system of the Hindu joint family has a mos noralising effect on the individual members of th ly; and its effect, more especially, on the most cap nd intelligent member—the member who earns his o hood and the livelihood of a number of others—is n rious, driving him to fraudulent and binami transac-t elude the inroads of idle greed.

general demoralisation of the member famil with a direct or indirect interest in the joint pro-perty and earnings, and the taking away of individual freedom from the earning member who, by his intelligence and capacity, is most likely to be of use to society, are among the worst evils of this system. I have already dwelt on the importance of individual freedom as a factor in social progress. In proportion as the individual is allowed full scope for the elevation and expansion of his nature, the society of which he is a member and for whose progressive well-being he is called upon to labour and employ his talents, makes progress along all the lines of civilization. Although the material and social conditions of a nation help the moulding of individual character, still the reverse is also true, and we see almost every day how the knowledge, energy and corporate capacity of individuals

are building up the fortunes and greatness of nation: Even outside the dominion of man, in the wider dominio of nature, the same law of a ceaseless struggle for indi vidual assertion and individual perfection is seen to prevai All alike, animals and men, are seen struggling for this e —the end of individual mastery. Who is there in this wi world, in the sluggish and indolent countries of the East in the active and aggressive countries of the West, who is actuated by the ambition to rise to a higher position his neighbours have reached, to be less and less depen on others, to secure the freest and widest range for the play of his talents and capacities? Money, position, uthority are all prized, not so much for themselves ie means they furnish to satisfy this ambition, thi ated desire, in the heart of man. Tyrants and ve throughout the history of man tried to supp crush out this desire by their selfish policies a deeds. But as the present condition of Europe and can, ven of Asia, shows, this implanted natur —the nature of the low, crawling slave as well a mighty Emperor—will in the long run assert it times in open rebellions and violent efforts, but often in insidious plans and secret circumventions. The Peasant War of the 17th century, the French Revolution of the 18th and the socialistic and anarchic movements of the 19th in the European continent, are a few more prominent among the numerous instances of man's instinctive desire for freedom, bursting like volcanic eruptions through obstacles placed by ambitious and self-seeking rulers, who in their own deeds and careers illustrate the law we are here laying stress upon. No system of society or government can endure which makes no provision somewhere for the expansion of the individual; and unless this is done, it must either explode in revolutions or sink into ruin and decay. In the robust West, it ended in revolutions,

while in the apathetic East, the political system collapsed, and society has sunk into hopeless decay. "To what is the stagnant condition of India with its swarming millions, due," asks an English writer,* "but to the system of caste which, leaving no room for individual character and genius to climb, reduces man to the condition of a thing, and of his immortal spirit makes a base and material tool merely? To be free to develop every side of our nature according to the infinite variety and subtlety of genius and aspirations, that is expansion, that is liberty." Caste is the colossal Jagannáth under whose ponderous wheels the Hindu nature is squeezed and crushed; but the joint family system is the car of the minor deity which, behind the chief figure in the destructive show, plays its own part with substantial effect.

Many a Hindu has had his whole nature strangled, his talents degraded, his budding ambition blighted, his hopes and aspirations frustrated, because amidst the heavy burdens pressing on him as the most useful member of a large joint family he could not act in obedience to his own impulses and convictions! There would be more public benefactors, more social reformers, and more patriots in India but for this social system and the tyranny of public opinion formed and educated under it, and other kindred institutions. How old grand mothers who will not die, brothers who have to be fed and brought up, and do-nothing dependents, have prevented many an educated Hindu from fulfilling his most ardent desire, his most cherished convictions, in the interest of his countrymen and his fellow-creatures. He has left his own wife and children helpless and dependent on public charity, because while he was alive, all his earnings were eaten up by brothers, nephews and cousins, who, in return would most cruelly eject from their doors the destitute widow of their late

* John Batie Crozier on Civilization and Progress.

benefactor. In such cases, gratitude is out of the question, because the help that the drones receive is not considered as a favour, but as an inadequate fulfilment of an obligation. They grumble that more is not done for them, and are jealous that others receive more of the master's good things. The Hindu joint family is seldom the happy home to which the responsible master returns for relief and rest after the day's hard toil; it is rather a feeding house where every one is fed, not out of charity, but as a matter of right on the part of the dependents; and for all the sacrifice that the master undergoes, anything but gratitude from the dependents or place in his own mind is the guerdon.

It is only among Hindus that this custom of an earning man supporting a large number of relations and dependents prevails. In no other country is this obligation recognised to the same extent. Even among the Mahomedans of India the joint family system does not prevail. I do not lose sight of the natural feeling of attachment between brothers and sisters that were brought up by the same parents and under the same roof. But this attachment can be healthy and beneficial only when it is spontaneous and not forced. In the discussion that was raised on Sir V. Bashyam Iyengar's Gains of Learning Bill, a good deal was said of the obligation of the member educated at the joint expense of the family to educate and bring up the other members. I do not see how this obligation arises. The education of children is recognized in all civilized countries as an obligatory duty of the parents; and such importance is attached to the proper education of every member of the community, that, if the parents are unable to discharge this duty, the State undertakes it. The persons that were responsible for my birth are bound to see that I do not become a burden to myself and to society. If the birth of healthy children, the bringing up of capable citizens and the progressive

perpetuation of the species, is the object and end of the union of the sexes, then this duty should be boldly faced by the parents or should be undertaken by the community which benefits by the consequences of this natural instinct. To throw this duty on the back of an individual who is in no sense answerable for the union of the sexes or for its consequences, is unreasonable and wrong. To contend that anything done to weaken this obligation recognized in the Hindu joint family system will result in the retardation of progress in the general education of the community is to betray ignorance of the social conditions of other countries in the world. In countries where every man and woman can read and write, no such system exists; and among the non-Hindu sections of the Indian population, Parsees and Native Christians, and Mahomedans, education is not obstructed by the absence of the peculiarities of the Hindu social system. To shelve on other shoulders the responsibility which belongs to the parents must have the effect of making them undervalue its seriousness and show improvidence and wrecklessness in the bringing up of the family. How many Hindu parents are there who feel and act under the conviction that they will rather have a few children and give them good education and respectable breeding, than have a number of them who cannot all be educated, cannot inherit sufficient means to support themselves, or get a decent start in life? Yet nothing can be more desirable for the material and moral well-being of the community than such a feeling and such a conviction.

One great merit that is claimed for the Hindu joint family system is that it solves the problem of the poor in India. Though there is some force in this, yet I cannot admit that the absorption of a large portion of the pauper and idle population in the family is an unmixed good. As I have already said, the Hindu family does not foster a genuine feeling of charity, for it is not spontaneous or dis-

criminate and is often exercised under circumstances which, instead of blessing both the giver and the receiver, demoralise both, and bring evil to the individual and the community. A system of pauper relief which will make every able-bodied idler to work and earn his own livelihood is an infinitely better solution of the question than our joint family system. Mr. H. J. S. Cotton, to whose opinion I have already alluded, contests this point as follows: "I think you somewhat unnecessarily assume that if the family drones were bereft of family support they would sink into the condition of paupers, and become a burden upon the general community. The argument may be unduly pressed. For there is indeed little or no analogy between the problem of pauperism in Europe and of poverty in India. In ordinary times—famine and other similar calamities apart—the pauper of India is not like the pauper of England, for whom sustenance can only be found at the public cost; and the reason of this is that the necessaries of life in an inclement country like England are so immeasurably greater and more expensive than they are in India. In ordinary times I should have no fear of the pauperisation of India if the Hindu joint family system ceased to exist. There is no pauperisation among Mahomedans with whom no such system prevails. In times of crisis the charity of the joint family dries up unavoidably, the misery and starvation among the idle mouths dependent on it for their support is even greater than it would have been if they had previously been in the habit of endeavouring to support themselves. These drones are paupers already. They should be compelled to work, but the existence of the family system removes the necessity. Only in time of famine it is that they are cast out, a useless number of mouths to feed, who in no inconsiderable degree enhance the difficulty of the problem of famine administration."

Another great objection to the joint family system is that it degrades the position of women. Instead of ruling the family as its queen, commanding obedience and reverence, the Hindu woman is the drudging slave. No culture or elevation of feminine nature is possible in a Hindu home. The first essential of a happy family, a free love between husband and wife, is restricted and smothered by the cross influences of a number of individuals who do not strictly belong to the family. The instinct of love is as deeply implanted in the human mind as are other natural instincts, and it constantly forces a vent for its exercise. But hindrances that cannot be overcome restrain this exercise, giving rise to a good deal of demoralisation of both the parties. A genuine love, a true feeling of affinity, cordial companionship, mental correction and elevation—are said by modern scientists to be essential for healthy offspring. But our constitution of the family makes this impossible. How unnatural is this constitution, is almost daily illustrated in the constant grumbling of the old matron of the house of the dominion of the wife over the husband who, fearing the displeasure of his elderly relations, and at the same time unable to resist the instinct which draws him in a bond of holy and affectionate kinship close to his wife, is a most unhappy victim to his own embarrassment and moral conflict. Many a young wife has suffered the most cruel treatment from her husband and has had her whole life blasted and wrecked under the coercion of the unsympathetic and selfish drones hanging on the family. No happiness, no culture, no ideal is possible to the Hindu wife, her only ideal is to drudge in the kitchen from day's end to day's end. The four walls of the Zenana enclose the universe that she knows. "The moral man grows on the knees of the mother"—but in India, the child—the father of the man—knows nothing like mother's training and experiences very little of the

sacred influence which the tender solicitude of the mother exercises on the child's moral as well as physical growth. The mother herself—though she is only a child when the burden of maternity begins to rest on her—can receive or give herself no education whatever. Liberty of every kind being denied, she has her natural intelligence and her faculties crushed by restraints or degraded by ill-treatment. If we observe the difference between the joint family as it still survives in villages and out of the way places, and the family constituted by the educated Hindu of the modern times, with his young wife far off from his parents and elderly relations, in regard to the relation between husband and wife and general tone of the family, how in the one case the young wife is a dumb driven cattle, an entire stranger to all freedom, to all elevating impulses and influences, and how in the other she with dignity plays the mistress of the household, is a ministering angel to her husband, and the earnest but gentle tender of her children, the unnatural and vicious constitution of the joint family system will be apparent. Away from her mother-in-law and the family she dominates, the young Hindu wife is a blithesome sprightly girl, loving freedom, and indulging in her natural tastes. She learns and exercises responsibility; reads and thinks; is curious about world's affairs, and has her faculties expanded. But in the cramping atmosphere of the joint family she is an overworked, ill-treated, sullen and unhappy creature, the very picture of helplessness and depression. In such a state it is impossible that the Hindu mothers can originate a progeny that can be of service in the advancement of society's well-being.

In Bengal, it is believed, the joint family system has made the seclusion of the women behind the *Purda*, and the pernicious practice of infant marriage, necessary. "A numerous group, like our joint family, between whom the

bonds of natural affection are very unequal cannot, I fear, be allowed the fullest social intercourse, and that within the seclusion of the home, without serious danger to their moral purity; and the *purda* being thus necessary within the family, it cannot be dispensed with in respect of outsiders. The *Purda* as well as the subordinate organization of the zenana system, requires that the newly married wife should be trained to the habits and ways of the society she enters into. To this end infant marriages are more or less indispensable."* Thus in Bengal this system has developed evils which in Southern India have not overtaken it. Here neither the purda system nor the practice of child marriage is an inseparable characteristic of the joint family. Dravidian women, like their sisters of the Dekhan and Western India, are not secluded behind the *purda*, though their movements inside the house as well as outside are subjected to restraints sometimes exceeding the necessary limits of that modesty and reserve which so much add to the grace of feminine nature. Nor is the practice of child marriage prevalent among the non-Brahmin communities who are as much addicted to the joint family system as the Brahmins. There can be no doubt that the *purda* system as well as child marriages were introduced in consequence of Mahomedan rule to protect women from the violence which the example of Mahomedan rulers and the general lawlessness of the times encouraged. But to say that the *purda* is necessary to protect the moral purity of women within the four walls of the home is as absurd in theory as it is a gross libel on Hindu women. In Southern India, I have heard of joint families consisting of fifty persons and more, and not a whisper has been heard against the chastity of their feminine inmates. Hindu women have many defects in their nature: they are ignorant, superstitious, liable to

* A Bengali gentleman's views quotedby Mr. H. J. S. Cotton.

be easily tumpted, wanting in refinement; in fact they have most of the defects incidental to a crude state of society in which women are held in subjection. But their chastity has never been questioned. If in Bengal greater precautions are deemed necessary to screen the weak feminine nature against the outrage of the other sex, it can only show how wicked the masculine sex of Bengal must be. Still neither in Bengal nor in any part India is the *purda* a necessary part of the Hindu family system, no more than it is of the family system of other countries in the world. In Southern India where the purda does not seclude the women of the family from men, the position of the women is degraded enough; but the *purda* of the Bengal household can only add to this degradation. "It consigns women," says Mr. H. J. S. Cotton, "to a condition of subordination and subjection which experience shows us is inseparable from a life of domestic servitude. It is based on a coarse view of life, which has no other bond of union between the sexes than a mere sensual idea." If the practice of child marriage is rendered necessary by the joint family system, the system is to be condemned all the more. The most narrow minded reactionary among modern Hindus has not found justification for child marriage, the greatest curse, next to caste, that has brought the Hindu race so low. To say that girls should be married when they are yet children in order to prevent immorality only shows how wicked and immoral must be the society where a man cannot come in contact with a woman without being moved by the vilest of thoughts. Child marriage is not the universal practice in India, and yet in families where girls are not married until they are well advanced in years, female chastity is preserved beyond the reach of slander or calumny. To woman as well as man purity is possible under a good domestic discipline; and if in India women more readily yield to temptations or succumb to the wickedness of man, it is because their moral

as well as physical nature is weak, partly in consequence of inherited physioolgical conditions and partly of the sentiment ingrained in the nature of the Hindu woman that she should not resist man's intrusion or insult, however wicked his intention may be.

Woman, as I have said, is the preserver of future generations and improver of the race, in the sense that from her human evolution derives its progressive energy. The ancient Hindu sages recognised this sublime truth. Like the Greeks, they saw in the union of two individuals of opposite sexes, the sacred design of reproduction alone, which consecrated this act as necessary and sublime, thus preventing the possibility of unworthy suggestions and trains of thought in a normal and ripened intellect. They had not obscured and perverted this elementary impulse in man as modern civilization has, and therefore were still penetrated with the natural admiration and gratitude for the process which is the source of all life throughout the universe, the process of reproduction. They paid honors to the organs involved in this vital action, placed representations of them as symbols of fruitfulness in the temples, public places and dwellings, invented special deities to personify propagation, and paid them a worship which did not then degenerate into gross and purposeless sensuality until the later periods of the moral decay.* Human love is no doubt principally an impulse for the company of a certain individual with the purpose of reproduction, but in fact it is something more than this impulse. It is an enjoyment of the intellectual qualities of the beloved being. The sentiment survives the impulse for reproduction, and is a living force in the union of two individual throughout life. The intellect of the Hindu wife is not cultivated, and in modern times there is great disparity between the educated Hindu and his un-

* Max Nordau on Conventional Lies.

educated wife in regard to cultured intelligence. But, though the intellect of the Hindu woman is uncultivated, still she is not wanting in natural intelligence which makes her company a source of pleasure and often of edification. But this disparity ought not to exist, and to raise her from her position of mental inferiority which often mars domestic felicity and causes great injury to the offspring, is one of the objects with which an alteration in the foundation of the Hindu family system is advocated.

The degradation of woman is the result of our social system, and by her ignorance and weakness and by her very degraded state, she often falls and sinks into deeper degradation. The old bonds of society are giving way and woman has no longer the same safeguards and asylums that she had in former times. There is consequently a larger number of helpless widows and orphans and deserted women in the country, than there was apparently in times when Hindu society, rested firm on its old moorings. The individual as well as society must pay greater regard for the purity and elevation of woman's nature, by raising her to the dignity of freedom, by encouraging her sense of self-respect, and by arming her with the weapon of education. Above all, she must be placed above anxiety for her daily bread, because it is poverty that brings many a woman to ruin. The Hindu family system instead of recognising these claims of woman, and being constituted on the principle of her sovereignty in the family, consigns her to a condition of subordination and subjection, and thus corrupts and narrows the very fountain from which human evolution derives its energy and health.

To sum up the foregoing arguments. As Lord Rosebury said at Glasgow,* the twentieth century would be a period of keen and almost fierce competition among nations; and into this competition India would be drawn more

* In his Rectoral address on the 10th of November 1900.

directly than ever by virtue of her dependence on England. The result of India being thus turned in the vortex of international struggles for the wealth of the world, would be the approximation of her social and political institutions to the models of the West. The secret of success that Western nations are winning is the perfect freedom of the individual and his readiness to sacrifice his own private interest for the well-being of society; and in proportion as social and political institutions of a country satisfy these two tests, they will be either praised or condemned. The Hindu joint family system is the least designed to develope these qualities; on the other hand it crushes individual freedom, it degrades woman, it breeds incompetency and selfishness instead of public sprit among the citizens; and is altogether incompatible with the spirit of the new civilization which is spreading over India in consequence of British rule and of a quicker intercourse between the East and the West. From these causes, we should pronounce the Hindu Joint Family System to be a doomed institution, and say, in the words of Mr. H. J. S. Cotton, that it only remains for the leaders of the Hindu community, by gentle and judicious guidance, to control the period of transition, so that it may be passed over with the least possible disturbance, and after rejecting the environments which prejudice and disfigure the present system, to reorganize the more suitable materials which are available for their purpose on a healthy and progressive basis.

VI.—Fusion of Sub-Castes in India.

BY RAI BAHADUR LALA BAIJ NATH, B.A.,

Judge, Court of Small Causes, Agra.

The Editor of the *Indian Herald* has asked me to contribute a paper to his forthcoming work on Indian Social Reform. The subject he has entrusted me with, is however, a very difficult and complicated subject, and I wish he had given it to one possessing greater knowledge and greater opportunities for observation. I shall however try to show as briefly as I can how the system of castes and sub-castes grew up in India, how far it forwards or retards its progress in the scale of nations and how it can best be modified to suit modern requirements. My views on the subject are already contained in my work on Hinduism: Ancient and Modern, and this paper can only be a reiteration of these views.

THE PURE CASTES OF ANCIENT INDIA.

The history of Caste in India shows how a society once healthy and progressive, goes lower in the scale of civilization by submitting itself blindly to priestly influence and shutting itself completely off from all healthy contact with other nations on the one hand and bringing within its sphere nations outside it, by descending to their level and adapting itself to their customs and institutions on the other. The ethical basis of caste as declard in the four-fold division of Hindu society into Brahmans, Kshattriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras is to-day the same as it was when the Rishis of the Purusha Sukta of the Rig Vedas (Book X, Hymn 90) sang of "the Brahman being the mouth, the Rajanya (Kshattriya) the arms, the Vaisya the thighs, and the Sudra the feet of the Purusha." But the superstructure is now regulated by quite a different system based

upon geographical division as well as upon functional distribution. While therefore it shall be impossible to blot the caste system out of India any more than out of any other country in the world where natural divisions of society into teachers, rulers, producers of wealth and servants and labourers are found and ought to be found, such reforms ought to be made in its superstructure, such portions of it as have become old and are crumbling into decay and are unfit for use, renewed and remodelled as shall bring the edifice into greater harmony with both modern requirements as well as with the design of its founders in the past. How this can be done without doing violence to the traditions of the people, how the reformer can work on the lines of least resistance in the face of inertia on the one hand and modern revivalistic tendencies on the other, is a question worthy of serious consideration. All success in social reform greatly depends upon how far you are able to broaden the basis of society. By this method alone you can do away with many of the evils which are rampant in it and your task is the easier when you have the sympathies of the civilized world and the sanction of religion with you. How this can be done in the matter of reform in the caste system we hope to show in this paper.

The Vedas and the Epics carry us back to the good old days of India when there were no castes and "the whole world consisted of Brahmans only. Created equally by Brahma men have in consequence of their acts become distributed into different orders. Those who became fond of indulging their desires and were addicted to pleasure and were of a severe and wrathful disposition, endowed with courage and unmindful of piety and worship......those Brahmans possessing the attributes of Rajas (passion) became Kshattriyas. Those Brahmans again, who, without attending to the duties laid down for them became possessed of the attributes of goodness (Satwa) and passion and took to the

practice of rearing of cattle and agriculture becam Vaisyas. Those Brahmans again who were addicted untruth and injuring others and engaged in impure act and had fallen from purity of behaviour on account possessing the attribute of darkness (Tamas) became Sudras Separated by occupation Brahmans became members of th other three orders." (Mahabharata, Moksha Dharma, cha 188). "Neither birth nor study nor learning constitute Brahmanhood, character alone constitutes it." (Maha bharata, Vana Parva, chap. 313, verse 108).

Manu also tells us that "a Sudra can become a Brah man and a Brahman a Sudra," and we read in the Maha bharata that "a person not trained in the Vedas is a Sudra and that whoever conforms to the rules of pure and virtuou conduct is a Brahmana" (Mahabharata, Vana Parva, chap 180, verse 32). Judged by this standard many of those who now claim to be and are recognized as Brahmans and many who are now treated a Sudras will soon cease to be so regarded. It is, however, impossible to bring modern Hindu society to recognize character as alone determining one's caste. Claims of birth cannot be ignored in the face of the deep-rooted and the universal belief of the Hindus in birth alone determining the class of society to which a person belongs. For can the work of centuries of priestly influence on the one hand and ignorance and superstition of the laity on the other be at once removed? What can possibly be done in this respect will however be shown in these pages hereafter.

THE MIXED CASTES OF ANCIENT INDIA.

Says Manu, "The Brahman, the Kshattriya, and the Vaisya are the three twice-born classes. The fourth the Sudra is once-born. There is no fifth caste." (Manu, chap. X, verse 4). Intermarriages among the various Aryan castes seem, however, to be common in those days, and these gave rise to a number of mixed castes in Ancient

India. For instance a person born of a Brahman father and a Kshattriya mother was considered to be a Brahman like his father, but tainted with the inferiority of his mother's caste. If he was born of a Brahman father and Vaisya mother he was an Ambashta, and if of a Sudra mother a Parsava. A Kshattriya's son from a Brahman mother was called a Suta, a Vaisya's son from a Kshattriya mother a Ma'gadha and from a Brahman mother a Vaideha. The son of a Sudra from a Brahman, a Kshattriya, and a Vaisya mother was respectively an Ayogava, a Kshatta, and a Cha'ndala. A member of the three twice-born classes who was not initiated into the Yajnopavita and the Gayatri was a Vratya. All these were, however, off-springs of lawful unions. The intermixture of these with the purer twice-born classes on the one hand and the mixed castes on the other gave rise to another large number of mixed castes, while foreign nations like the Paundrakas, the Andhras, the Dravidas, the Kambojas, the Yavanas, the Sa'ka's, the Pardas, the Palhavas, the Chuias, the Kiratas, the Dardas, and the Khasas, who were apparently outside the pale of Aryan society, were also declared to be Kshattriyas who had ceased to wear the sacred thread, or study the scriptures, or follow the advice of Brahmans in the matter of expiatory ceremonies. Such persons whether they spoke the Aryan or any other dialect were all declared to be Chauras. "The duties assigned to these mixed castes were those which the pure Aryan would not follow. The Sutas trained and yoked horses though as in the case of Sanjaya of the Mahabharata they were also companions and ministers of kings and met the Rishis on their own ground in matters of learning and culture. The Ambashtas acted as physicians, the Vaidehas as guardians of royal households, the Ma'gadha's as traders on land, the Kshattas, the Ugras and the Pukkas caught and killed animals, the Dhigvanas sold hides and the Vainas played on instru-

ments of music made of bell metal. They lived on the outskirts of villages under trees and in burning grounds. The Chandalas and the Swapactas who also lived outside villages owned asses and dogs, ate unclean food and took clothes covering corpses.

The arts of life flourished greatly in the Epic period. Arms and accoutrements were made in great perfection, carriages drawn by horses and oxen, elephants adorned with gold and silver, and garments embroidered with gold were common. Ayodhya, Dasaratha's capital was furnished with " rows of well arranged shops. It contained theatres for females. It was gleaming with gold burnished ornaments and its people wore ear-rings and tiaras and garlands" (Valmiki Ramayana, Balkand, chaps. V and VI). The artizans were however apparently not members of the pure, but of the mixed castes, for which the pursuits of the former were indicated in detail while those of the latter were not.

Progress from a lower to a higher caste was however recognized in those times and a Parsava who was the offspring of a Brahman father and a Sudra mother could, according to Manu, become a Brahman in the seventh generation. Such a person, if he performed a Paka Yajnya according to the Smritis, became an Arya (Brahman), (Manu, chap. X, verses 64 and 67). Vidura of the Mahabharata who was the son of a Brahman from a Sudra woman was looked upon as the very embodiment of Dharma (righteousness), while a fowler who sold meat instructed a Brahman in the deepest mysteries of the Sastras.

In the matter of food also we do not find the same restrictions in those times as prevail now-a-days. A Brahman was prohibited from taking food from a Sudra except in times of extreme distress. In such times a Rishi like Vamdeo though cognizant of Dharma (righteousness) took prohibited food and yet was not sullied. The Rishi Bhâradwâja accepted in a lonely place a gift of cows from

a Taksha (carpenter), while Viswamitra had no scruple in subsisting upon food of the uncleanest description taken from the house of a Chandala pleading that "a person does not incur a grave sin by eating unclean food when he is dying of hunger." At other times we are told in the Mahabharata that "a Brahman may take his food from another Brahman, or from a Kshattriya or a Vaisya but not from a Sudra. A Kshattriya may take his food from a Brahman, a Kshattriya or Vaisya but not from a Sudra. Brahmans were however prohibited from taking food from a person who professed the healing art, or who was the warder of a house, or who lived by learning alone or from a mechanic or a woman who was unchaste, or an adulterer, or a drunkard, or a eunuch, or a person who had misappropriated another's money, in short from one addicted to evil ways, or who took all manner of food without scruple;" (Mahabharata, Anusasana Parva, chap. 135).

CASTES AND SUB-CASTES OF MODERN INDIA.

We have thus seen how the system of pure and mixed castes prevailed in ancient India and how the latter were the result of intermarriage among the various purer castes, what their status was and how far people of a lower caste could, like Visvamitra, rise to a higher one. Caste in those days was not the rigid institution it now is, otherwise the Hindus would never have attained to the pitch of civilization they did, nor with the highly developed intellects and the culture of not only the Kshattriyas and the Vaisyas, but of some of the Sudras also, could birth alone have given to the people that status in society which it does now. How vastly different it is now-a-days. Not only is caste the express badge of Hinduism, its stronghold and the perpetuator of status and function both by inheritance and endogamy, but at the root of that loss of catholic sympathy and originality in action which are now so painfully noticeable in Hindu society. No Hindu of to-day would

be satisfied by calling himself a Brahman, a Kshattriya, a Vaisya or a Sudra. He must say to what tribe of each of these castes he belongs before his social status is determined. How this arose is now the question for consideration. The social and religious divisions of the Indian people are now based upon an "exclusive devotion to heredity and custom manifested in the inclination to exalt the small over the great, to exaggerate the importance of minor considerations and thus obscure that of the more vital. Liturgy and ceremonial observances usurp the place of moral and spiritual ideas, with the result that the sanction of religion is applied to all the regulations of social intercourse. Rank and occupation are thus crystallized into hereditary attributes, a process which ends in the formation of a practically unlimited number of self-centred and mutually repellant groups, cramping to the sympathies and the capacity for thought and actions. Within these groups, it is hardly possible to speak too highly of the charity and devotion of the members of the community to each other, but beyond them, the barriers on all sides preclude co-operation and real compassion and stifle originality in action" (General Census Report, 1891, page 121).

The present subdivision of castes is due to geographical divisions, trade distinctions and differences in form of worship. To commence with the Brahmans, they are now divided into the Panch Guaras and the Panch Dravidas. The former comprise (1) the Saraswatas, so called from the country watered by the river Saraswati. They are largely found in the Punjab, and their usages and manners conform in many respects to those of the Khattris of that province, with whom they often eat and mix freely. (2) The Kanyakubjas so called from the Kanyakubja or the Kanouj country. These are now a very exclusive and isolated class not only as regards other Brahmans but among themselves also, and the proverb is current that for

nine Kanyakubjas you will have ten cooking places, each refusing to dine with the other, often with his nearest relations. So very exclusive is this class of people in the matter of marriages, that the smallness of its various clans causes the greatest difficulty in obtaining husbands for girls except on payment of extortionate sums of money. (3) The Guras, who are so called from Gaur or the country of the lower Ganges, are a very influential class of priests among the Vaisyas of the North-West Provinces and the lower portion of the Punjab, and enjoy the monopoly of their vast and enormous charity. They do not interdine with the Vaisyas as the Saraswatas of the Punjab do with the Khattris, but do not scruple to partake of food cooked by the Vaisyas and the Kshattriyas with milk, sweets and ghee. (4) The Utkalas of the province of Utkala or Orissa, and (5) the Maithalas from Mithila or Behar, complete the list of the Panch Gauras.

The Brahmans of Bengal who originally went from the North-West Provinces now form a separate class, with its many subdivisions which have given rise to the custom of Kulinism in that province. This five-fold division of the Brahmans is not the only one met with in Upper India. The Saraswatas of the Punjab are divided into as many as four hundred and sixty-nine classes and Sherring enumerates some 1,886 tribes of Brahmans.

The Brahmans of the South of the Vindhya range are called the Panch Dravidas. They are (1) the Maharashtras of the country of the Mahrattas. These were once the rulers of the country and still exercise much influence both for good as well as for evil among some of the Mahratta states of Central India, the Gujerat and the Deccan. They possess a genius for intrigue, and show much political ability and are ahead of most of the races of India in some respects. Orthodox Hinduism still retains its hold among many of them and the study of Sanscrit is more common

among their laity than among the corresponding class of the Brahmans of Upper India. (2) The Tailangas of the Telugu country, (3) the Dravidas of the Dravidian country, (4) the Karnatas of the Karnatic, and (5) the Gurjars of the Gujerat, complete the list of the Panch Dravidas. The Gurjar Brahmans are remarkable for their fine and well defined features and they are now the rivals of the Mahrattas in political power and literary ability. Southern India is even a greater stronghold of Brahmanism than Northern India. In spite of all progress in education, the people of the South are even more caste-ridden than the people of the North.

The Kashmiri Brahmans from Kashmere though few in number, are also not without their sub-divisions. They are largely met with both in the highest and lowest rank of Government service and the bar, and though ahead of most of the other Brahmans of Upper India in point of acuteness of intellect, they are not so in rising above petty caste distinctions. No list of Brahmans of Upper India can be complete without reference to the Chanbas (the Chaturvedi Brahmans) of Mathura and other parts of the North-West Provinces. In Mathura one section of this community is called the Mitha (sweet) Chanbas, to distinguish them from the Karwas (bitter) Chanbas! The former with few exceptions furnish the strongest possible contradiction to the name they bear, stout, burly, innocent of letters and exclusively devoted to athletics and eating; the Chanba generally fattens at the expense of the pilgrims to Mathura and justifies the saying of the Sanscrit poet, that it is the absolutely devoid of intellect and the absolutely wise that are truly happy, all others are miserable. They have the curious custom of Badla or exchange which means that a Chanba in order to get a wife must be prepared to give in return a girl from his own family for wife in the family in which he marries.

There is some difference of opinion as to whether modern Brahmans are of pure Arya blood; and from their finer features and fairer complexions than those of the rest of the community, it is thought that they are the descendants of the Aryas of old. But the majority of Brahmans of these parts (in Bengal and Southern India it is often worse) have not finer features and fairer complexions than other Indian races. Some of them are in fact darker in complexion and heavier in feature than some of the lowest races of modern times. Physiology can therefore be no guide in this respect. On the other hand instances of Rajas manufacturing Brahmans out of low caste men in Upper India are not rare. The Kunda Brahmans of Partabgarh in Oudh, the Tirgunaits and the Swalikhs of Gorakhpore and Basti, who call themselves Dubas (Dwivais), Upadhyas, Tivaris (Trivedis), etc., were the result of this process.

Then again how vast is the difference between the occupations of the Brahmans of the present day from those followed by their ancestors. There are at present about one and a half crores of Brahmans in India, but how many of these follow the injunctions of the Sastras in earning their livelihood by reading and teaching, accepting and making gifts, and performing and officiating at sacrifices? In the North-West Provinces some ten or fifteen per cent. can only be said to live by the exclusive performance of religious functions, and about 20 or 25 per cent. by adding secular callings to such functions. The rest perform no priestly office whatever but are land-holders, cultivators, soldiers, milk-men, cooks, cattle-grazers, water-carriers, singers, dancers, wrestlers, etc., etc. In fact there is no trade in which a Brahman will not now engage and the statistics of crime of the seaports show that there is no crime which he will not commit. What a fall for those who profess to act as mediators between man and God!

The Kshattriyas fare no better. They were formerly

divided into only two races, the Lunar and the Solar. Now they exhibit as many as 590 different tribes. Todd in his Rajasthan enumerates "Chathis Rajkula or the 36 Royal races, which are further sub-divided into 157 branches or sakhas, the principal ones like the Ghilote having 24, the Tuar 17, the Rehtor 13, the Parmara 35, the Chamhan 26, the Challook 16, and the Purapara 12. Each race (Sakha) has its Gotracharya of genealogical creed describing the essential peculiarities, the religious tenets and the pristine locale of the clan. It is a touch-stone of affinities and guardian of the laws of intermarriage." (Todd's Rajasthan, Volume I, page 77). The present Rajput's knowledge of these is however of the meagrest description. Some of the Sakhas are now extinct, others are still found in Upper India. Many of the chiefs of Rajputana and Central India trace their origin to one or the other of these Sakhas. The Jats who now form a very important agricultural class in the Punjab also trace their origin to the Yadava clan of the Kshattriyas, to which Krishna belonged. But the latter do not now recognize them as such. Some European writers assign the Jats a Scythian origin. The modern Rajput, even though greatly deteriorated, has however some independence of character and refinement of manners which at once mark him off from the Jat, the Gujar or any other class which claims affinity with him. He has still preserved many a relic of old both in his court as well as in his household. "Traditional history" has still a large influence over his mind. "The Rajput mother," says Todd, "claims her full share in the glory of her son, who imbibes at the maternal fount his first rudiments of chivalry; and the importance of this parental instruction cannot be better illustrated than in the ever-recurring simile, "make thy mother's milk resplendant"; the full force of which we have in the powerful, though over-strained expresssion of the Boondi queen's joy on the

announcement of the heroic death of her son: "the long dried fountain at which he fed, jetted forth as she listened to the tale of his death, and the marble pavement on which it fell rent asunder." Equally futile would it be to reason on the intensity of sentiment thus implanted in the infant Rajpoot of whom we may say without metaphor, the shield is his cradle, and daggers his playthings; and with whom the first commandment is "avenge thy father's feud," on which they can heap text upon text, from the days of the great Pandu moralist Vyasa, to the not less influential bard of their nation the Tricala Chand. "(Todd's Rajasthan, Vol. I, page 596-97.)"

The Rajput's marriage customs still retain their military character but only in name; and though reforms in the expenditure incurred in his marriage and other ceremonies have lately been attempted in Rajputana and elsewhere, yet so far as the vast bulk of the Rajput population of Upper and Central India is concerned, their habits are not very frugal and to live beyond means is their normal condition. In one section of the community, the Khattri Rajpoots of the Bareilly division, we are told they have still the curious custom of hanging the bridegroom head downwards at the door of his father-in-law till the latter consents to pay what the bridegroom's father demands!

They have hitherto been the most backward in profiting by modern education and efforts at reform have barely touched the surface of the community. And yet one often meets with many a Thakur possessing great acuteness of intellect and in some instances a poetic imagination also. Some of them are and have been Hindu writers of repute, while others show great aptitude for Hindu philosophy and it is not uncommon to see a Rajput chief once a great figure in politics, leaving off every thing for a life of contemplation and study.

The decline of the Kshattriya race is due to its general disregard of its duties in life, its habits of indolence, and indulgence in intoxicants and strong drink as well as to the introduction of inferior blood, till it is now doubted if the modern Rajputs are representatives of the Kshattriyas of old. Many of the names of the present clans of the Rajput tribes of Upper India suggest that they originally belonged to the pastoral or the hunting castes, who, at various times, seized lands and kept them and formed themselves into distinct and separate castes. And a writer in the N. W. P. Gazetteer (Vol. VIII, page 73) speaking of the Rajputs of the Mathura District says "that $\frac{3}{4}$ths of them are of impure blood and are not admitted by the higher clans to an equality with themselves."

Their original occupation of ruling and protecting the people is now either a thing of the past or is exercised only in name on account of Pax Brittania and their lands in British India are fast passing into the hands of the monied classes. Now-a-days they chiefly concern themselves with agriculture or engage in petty quarrels, or pass their time in indolence or debauchery or take to menial occupations. Such is the present condition of the majority of one crore of Rajputs now living in India and professing to represent the Kshattriyas of old, the pride of their country.

The third great class is the Vaisya. At the last census out of about 1 crore 21 lacs of persons belonging to the trader caste, 31,86,666 returned themselves as Banias or Mahajans, 89,226 as Vaisyas, 3,54,177 as Agarwalas, 1,57,716 as Oswalas, 20,899 as Shirnalis, the rest comprised among others Agrahraris, Kasaundhans, Kamdus, of N. W. P; Ghandabaniks, Suwarnabaniks, of Bengal; Aroras and Khattris of the Punjab; Bhatias of Bombay, and Chettis of Madras. The chief divisions of the Vaisyas are into: (1) the Agrawal, comprising the Vaishnawas and the Jains, the Maheshwaris, the Oswalas, the Khandelwalas, the

Shrionalis, the Rajabansis, the Rustogis, the Barasenis, the Mathurs, and the Ilahawaras. Todd enumerates 84 mercantile tribes, but the statistics of the Vaisya Conference for the last 7 years show the above to be the principal sections of the Vaisyas. They all interdine but do not intermarry. A spirited controversy once arose as to whether the Agrawalas were Vaisyas or Kshattriyas. Tradiation says that in the Lunar race of kings was one Raja Mahidhar whose son was Raja Ugrasena, after whom the caste was named Agrawala. He married two wives Dhaupala and Sundar, from each of whom he had 9 sons who married the 18 daughters of Raja Vasuki of the Naga race. These were the progenitors of the present 18 Agrawala gotras. Another legend traces the Agrawalas to Agroha a town on the borders of Hariana in the Punjab, and tradition goes that so strong was the spirit of fraternity and so flourishing were the Vaisyas of that town, that whenever an Agrawala became poor each of his caste people contributed a rupee for his support and gave him a brick to build a house from and thus at once brought him to their own level. The Vaisyas are, as a rule, a rising and wealthy and prosperous community, but mostly prone to indulge in extravagance in marriages. They comprise among them traders of all grades from the merchant prince to the village hawker of articles of food. Being an aristocratic and monied class with no political power, they have been able to preserve their purity of descent more than the Brahmans or the Kshattriyas, and the assertion of some Sanskrit writers that in the Kali Yuga only the first and the last classes, the Brahmans and the Sudras, exist and that all others are extinct, has been refuted in their case, not only on grounds of continuity of occupation which is now the same as it was in the time of Manu but of physiology also. The modern Vaisya shows a greater dash of Aryan blood than the modern Brahman or the Kshattriya.

His features are as refined, his complexion as fair, as that of the best races of India, and the fact that he is rapidly making his way in callings requiring the exercise of the highest intelligence shows that if any race has not received mixture of foreign blood, it is this.

Among the other great trading classes of India are the Khattris, the Aroras, the Bhatias, and the Marwaris. The Khattris who numbered 6,86,511 and the Aroras who numbered 6,73, 695, at the last census, are largely found in the Punjab and parts of Upper India. They claim to be of Kshattriya origin and are divided into castes and sub-castes mostly local, such as the Pachaniyans (Westerners), Purabiyas (Easterners), Punjabis, Dilwalis (from Delhi), etc. None of these intermarries or interdines.

The Bhatias (56,792) are largely found in Cutch and Sindh. They are a very enterprising community, having a large portion of foreign trade in their hands. They are great followers of the Gosains of the Vallabha sect and make the fortunes of the latter even though some of them prove themselves unworthy of their gifts. The Gandhabaniks (1,23,765) and the Subarbaniks (97,540) of Bengal are also called Vaisyas, but there is no connection between them and the Vaisyas of the other parts of India. The Marwaris from Marwar are included in the Agrawala, the Oswala, the Khawdelwala and the Shrimali Vaisyas mentioned above. The Chettis 7,02,141 and the Lingayatas 1,01,687 are the trading castes of Southern India, but none of them has any connection with the trading castes of Upper India or Bengal.

The Kayasthas (22,39,810) are the great writer caste. In Upper India they number 5,21,812 and trace their origin to king Chitragupta who had 4 sons from each of his two wives. The present Kayasthas are said to have descended from these 8 sons of Chitragupta. Another account assigns them a functional origin and says that

Chitragupta is the mythical writer at the court of Yama the king of the dead and that the Kayasthas trace their origin to him on account of their profession being that of writers. They are divided into (1) the Mathuras, (2) the Saksenas, (3) the Srivastavas, (4) the Bhatnagaras, (5) the Asthanas, (6) the Nigams, (7) the Ambashtas, (8) the Gours, (9) the Surajdwhajas, (10) the Karanas, (11) the Sreshtas and (12) the Valmikis. None of these intermarry or interdine. They are, as a rule, a very acute and intelligent community and have always furnished the government of the day with a large staff of secretaries and writers and the public with village accountants. They show great aptitude to adapt themselves to the institutions of the times and seem to have been in as great request under ancient as under modern *regimes.* In Bengal they number about 1½ millions, in Bombay under the name of Parbhu about 30,000, but none of these has anything to do with the Kayasthas of Upper India in the matter of intermarriage or interdining.

The above are the only classes of Hindus which are or claim or can be said to be of Aryan origin. Below these is quite a bewildering number of castes and sub-castes which trace their origin to function but are now regulated by claims of birth. Among the cultivating castes the Kunbis (10 millions), the Malis, the Lodhas, the Kachis, each numbering between 1½ and 1¾ millions, the cattle breeding caste (the Ahir) about 8 millions and the cow-herds (Goalas) about 2 millions, were all originally function classes, but are now divided into separate castes and sub-castes. The menial classes who number about 14 millions are also as minutely divided as the others. A Chamar who makes shoes belongs to a different caste from a Mochi who makes harness. A Bhangi who is a sweeper claims to be a member of a different order from a sweeper whose patron saint is Lal-Beg. The artizans who number about 29

millions fare no better. Blacksmiths, silversmiths, and goldsmiths, all constitute different castes, so do Kaseras who manufacture and sell brass vessels and Thatheras who beat brass plates. Carpenters in some parts of the country wear the sacred thread but are not allowed to associate with any of the three twice-born castes, properly so called. The weaver, the tailor, the fringe-maker, the dyer and the calicoprinter are all different castes. In some portions of the country the Halwais (the confectioners) constitutes a separate caste, in others they are either Brahmans, Vaisyas, or Khattris. The Kahars who form a large class of domestic servants are now a different caste from the Kewats and the Dhimars (the fishing castes) though they were originally one and the same. In the religious orders which profess to be above caste distinctions, such distinctions are also as rampant as among other Hindus. We have among us about 27 lacs of devotees and ascetics who are divided into Gosains, Bairagis, Vaishnavas, Dandis, etc. The followers of Shiva have 12 sects, the followers of Vishnu 6, and the followers of either but according to a particular guru. The Gosaïus are both a caste and an order, the former because they do not observe celibacy and the latter because they receive accessions to their ranks from the other castes. They numbered 2,31,612 at the last census. The Vishnavas count about 4½ lacs, and the Bairagis about 3 lacs. The jealousy of these orders reaches its culminating paint at the (Kumbha) the great bathing festival in Hardwar which takes place every 12 years and in former times pitched battles used to be common between them. The Bairagis have also taken to married life and are proving false to their name, while some of the Dandi Sanyasins who show themselves to be caste-ridden are falsifying the very first principles of their order.

RESULTS OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF CASTES AND SUB-CASTES.

I have thus attempted to show, though necessarily very briefly and imperfectly, how rampant caste is in modern India. Such a condition of the community can scarcely foster any sentiment of nationality or favour progress or check its more degraded portions from slipping out of its yoke and embracing foreign creeds in the hope of bettering their social position. All non-conformistic movements in India from Buddhism downwards, and all success of foreign proselytising missions whether undertaken by the sword or by persuasion are mostly traceable to the rigidity of the fetters with which caste binds the Hindus. And yet the present system has not so much of a religious as a functional origin. In its earlier stages it constituted a bond of union and formed people into distinct units. It did not limit the right of membership to those who were born within its ranks from both parents and did not therefore cause the harm it is doing now. As it now stands, you can defy caste by eating, drinking, worshipping or occupying yourself in any manner you choose, so long as you outwardly observe your caste rules. A Brahmana, a Kshatriya or a Vaisya may take the most prohibited food or associate with women outside his caste without being outcasted, if he only outwardly observes his caste rules. But let him eat the most lawful food with a foreigner or cross the sea for a most lawful object or marry outside his caste in the most lawful manner, and he is at once thrown out, unless his caste connives at these practices. Caste therefore as now prevailing in Hindu society cannot but undermine the race physically, intellectually and morally—physically by narrowing the circle of selection in marriages, intellectually by cramping the energies, and morally by destroying mutual confidence and habits of co-operation. And it speaks well of the marvellous inherent vitality of the race that it has been able to retain and achieve so much in

the face of so many and such powerful drawbacks. An instrument of petty tyranny, caste makes the highest and the best of the community submit to those who are their inferiors morally and intellectually but who form a powerful factor for evil. The tyranny of a small section of society becomes most unreasonable when the latter issues wrong mandates or interferes in matters in which it ought not to interfere and this is what caste now does among the Hindus. It had its uses in the earlier stages of society when inroads of foreigners necessitated its forming itself into compact and well organized groups and when the condition of the arts of life required that trade secrets should be kept confined to a limited circle. But the circumstances are not now the same nor do the times require India to be divided into a number of small and mutually repellant communities. If we see ourselves as others see us, we shall find that they attribute our backwardness in civilization to our present system of caste. Says Mr. Kidd: "In eastern countries where the institution of caste still prevails, we have indeed only an example of a condition of society in which (in the absence of that developmental force which we shall have to observe at work amongst ourselves) these groups and classes have become fixed and rigid and in which consequently progress has been thwarted and impeded at every turn by innumerable barriers which have for ages prevented that free conflict of forces within the community which has made so powerfully for progress among the western peoples." (Social Evolution, p. 154). I have already quoted the opinion of the late Census Commissioner on the caste system, and I shall now refer to what another writer has to say on the subject. "Society" says Mr. Nesfield in his Review of the Caste System prevailing in the North Western Provinces and Oudh (Pages, 103-104), "instead of being constituted as one organized whole, is divided against itself by inor-

ganic sections like geological strata. The sense of insecurity thus engendered could not but lead to a loss of independence and courage in the characters of individuals. For a man soon ceases to rely on himself if he thinks that no reliance is to be placed on the good will and fair dealing of those around him and that everything which he m. say or do, is liable to be suspected or misconstrued. Thus the two great defects in the Indian character—a want of reliance on one's self and a want of confidence in others—have sprung from a common source, the terror-striking influence of caste. The caste arrogance of the Brahman which first sent these evil spirits abroad has corrupted the whole nation and descended to the very lowest strata of the population..................Not only has caste demoralized society at large, but it is a constant source of oppression within its own particular ranks. Caste is therefore an instrument both of widespread disunion abroad and of the meanest tyranny at home, and the latter of these evils has intensified the want of courage and self-reliance to which we have lately alluded as being one of the greatest defects in the Indian character." "Had the Brahman never come into existence and had his arrogance proved to be less omnipotent than it did, the various industrial classes would never have become stereotyped into castes and the nation would have been spared a degree of social disunion to which no parallel can be found in human history" (p. 116).

Reform in the Caste System.

Reform in the present system of caste and sub-castes is therefore absolutely required by the altered conditions of Indian society. Caste, as I have already said, cannot be banished from India any more than from any other soil. But it may be so reformed as to foster good instead of evil. The task of the reformer in this respect is, however, full of difficulties, but if he keeps steadily in

view the ideal of expansion rather than contraction of nationality as has hitherto been done, he shall be successful in the end. His greatest difficulty will be inducing the highest and the lowest castes both of which are extremely arrogant in caste matters, to accept his programme of re-[illegible]he caste arrogance of the Brahman finds its [illegible]allel in the caste arrogance of the lowest sections of society who despise their neighbours on most frivolous distinctions. In the other castes it is not so bad. If therefore the reformer works on the lines already laid down by the various caste conferences in the country, *viz.*, to make those sub-sections of a caste which interdine also intermarry, he shall gradually bring about such a fusion of castes as shall broaden the basis of society and pave the way for further reform. It will be necessary to start with the most minute sub-divisions and work upwards to the comparatively larger ones. It will not be possible nor desirable to have the right of connubium follow the right of convivium within the same gotra of a sub-caste. The rule of not marrying in one's gotra is one to which no exception can be admitted. But there is no reason why the right of connubium should not follow the right of convivium outside a gotra. India has been ruined from want of an organized Indian nation. It was not so in the past. Let it therefore be the care of modern Indian reformers to restore it to its former standard of perfection where each section of society felt itself to be dependent upon and worked for the good of the other. The Aryans of old did not relinquish " duty from love of money nor from fear of death nor from dread of society." Let modern Aryans if they wish to be a nation do the same.

BAIJNATH.

WORKS CONSULTED.

The Rig Veda.
The Institutes of Manu.
The Ramayana of Valmiki.
The Maha Bharata.
Hunter's Indian Empire.
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Nesfield's Brief Review of the Tribes and Castes of the North-West Provinces and Oudh.
Kidd's Social Evolution.
Todd's Rajasthan.

VII.—Marriage Reform among the Hindus.

BY RAO BAHADUR R. N. MUDHOLKAR, B.A., L.L.B.,
High Court Vakil, Amraoti.

There is no doubt some basis for the trite observation that India is not a country but a continent, and contains not a nation but a congeries of nations: and when a stranger reads or hears of the vast extent of the country and of something like the three hundred millions who inhabit it, of the numerous religions and faiths which they profess and follow, Mahomedanism, Zoroastrianism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, Hinduism—with the almost countless sects which are included in it,—he is apt to be impressed with the absolute correctness of the remark. But to one who belongs to the country or has a knowledge of the actual condition of Indian society, the facts appear otherwise; and undoubtedly so, as far as the Hindu community are concerned. From the Himálayás down to the Indian Ocean and from the Indus to the Brahmaputrá the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra classes have institutions, manners, customs, observances, ceremonies which in essential features are the same. The members of the Jain sects, differ though they do in religious beliefs, dogmas and rituals from the orthodox sections of the Hindu community, are in the other matters which constitute their every day life, so similar that it is impossible to say from outward appearances whether a person is a Jain or an orthodox Hindu. We may go one step further and say that, so far as the bulk of the Mahomedan community is concerned, excluding religious observances, their domestic life is in several respects similar to that of the Hindus, which by the way cannot be a matter for surprise; for, they consist of the descendants of converts to Mahomedanism and come from the same stock as the Hindus. Hindus

and Mahomedans can well, in spite of difference of religion, be called one nation. But leaving Mahomedans out of consideration, the Hindus, who form the majority of the population, possess socially as well as politically all the characteristics of a nation; and every question affecting their well-being is a question of national importance. Out of the total population of 287 millions returned by the Census of 1891, over 222 millions are Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists. Social Reform in India, therefore, possesses a significance far greater than in other countries; and it is to be expected that every attempt to effect any alteration in the existing practices should in these days of free thought and free discussion excite the watchful jealousy and keen criticism of a highly intellectual people and often produce warm controversies.

There is no subject in regard to which there is greater difference of opinion productive of hot discussion than Marriage Reform. That phrase apparently giving expression to one idea denotes really speaking several subjects; many of them concern the very basis of social life. For an adequate treatment of them even a good-sized volume will not suffice.

In this paper the question of Marriage Reform is considered in some only of its most important aspects. It is proposed to deal chiefly with infant or early marriage, compulsory marriage and enforced widowhood; and even in regard to these it is hardly possible to give within the limits at my command anything more than a statement of the conclusions which the discussions that have taken place on the subjects suggest to me. Solicitous for the regeneration and progress of the great community to which I have the proud privilege to belong, and believing firmly that its material and moral regeneration cannot be effected without a considerable readjustment of its marriage customs, I am not unmindful that there are amongst

my countrymen several with knowledge, experience and abilities superior to what I may be allowed to possess, who with equal fervour believe that many of the views herein set forth are wrong and that Hindu society would suffer if the attempt to give effect to them succeeds. The number of such, however, is small among those who, having received the benefit of education in modern literature and science, are accustomed to subject every question to the test of reason.

According to the prevailing practice every girl must be married, and the religious ceremonies which create the binding tie and irrevocably unite the wife to the husband must be performed before the girl attains puberty. As will be shown further on, there are a few sections of Hindus amongst whom girls are permitted to be kept unmarried sometimes for years after they reach womanhood. But the general practice insists upon marriage before that event. For the marriage of men no age is prescribed, but the general custom is to get them married at the age of 15 or 16, indeed very often at the age of 10 or 11 even. Thus throughout the whole society the spectacle is presented of boys of 17 and 18 and girls of 13 and 14 entering upon married life and subjected to all its responsibilities. Little children of 14 becoming mothers is a very common sight. It is now conceded by most thinking people that this is a very deplorable state of things; and it is unquestionable that serious evils have resulted from these early marriages. The general deterioration in physique universally noticeable is justly attributed to this baneful custom, the greatest sufferers being the poor girls who enter upon maternity before their bodies are properly developed. The progeny of such parents cannot be otherwise than weak and sickly.

Equally harmful, both to the individuals concerned and to the country generally, are the interference with education and the crushing out of all spirit of enterprise.

and adventure which result from these early marriages. Thousands of promising young men have been forced to give up their studies and seek employment because the means of their parents or guardians were exhausted in getting them married, and the maintenance of the members of the family became itself a difficult question. In these days when so much thought is bestowed on the question of the poverty of the country and schemes for the restoration of the industrial eminence which India once enjoyed, are discussed, it should not be forgotten that some of the causes which have brought about pecuniary embarrassments and consequent ruin of many families can be removed by ourselves, if we only sufficiently exert ourselves and persevere in our efforts.

If the education of boys is interfered with and its progress hampered, that of girls in most cases completely ceases with her marriage, *i.e.*, from the age of 8 or 10. As it is, female education is in a most backward condition in this country and what of the so-called instruction is received is only till the age of 10 and after that there is complete cessation of it.

The want of enterprise and absence of love of adventure is phenomenal. Boy husbands burdened with family cares, with their education cut short, can hardly think of striking into new paths and going in quest of adventures either for fame or for money. The very restricted and low view taken of women's right and position can hardly be attributed to the notions about early or compulsory marriages, for they exist in communities which were or are free from these trammels. But there is no doubt that the elevation of woman to her proper position and her moral equipment for that position is greatly retarded by the existing marriage customs.

The information disclosed by the old Sanskrit literature in regard to the institutions of the ancient Hindus

shows that, during the best period of Aryan history, neither compulsory nor early marriage was enjoined for women, and it is during this period we find a high view taken of the dignity and rights of women and the wife was regarded as the half of her husband, not only figuratively, but participated in the glories and privations of war and peace, and was his companion in the study of science and philosophy.

Closely connected with early and compulsory marriage is its expensiveness. The presents to the bridegroom and his relations in cash and in kind, the feasts and parties, the vain displays and processions which a man who gets his daughter married to the son of a person of his social position has to provide, not merely strain his resources, but in many cases absolutely bring about his bankruptcy. This absurd costliness it is which is mainly responsible for the disparagement and low estimate in which female children are regarded and for the dislike which the majority feel for them.

In some castes and sections the evil has gone so far as to pervert human nature and brought about female infanticide, turning loving parents into worse than human monsters. To check these atrocities Government had to interfere and special methods had to be devised in the shape of the provisions of the Infanticide Act.

In the contemplation of human misery there is no more pathetic and heart-rending spectacle than the child widow of 8 or 10, hopelessly condemned to life-long misery and degeneration. And this exists only because there is compulsory child marriage. Even the staunchest and most orthodox upholders of the current Hindu beliefs admit that the lot of the child widow is most pitiable. A Hindu father, howsoever devout he might be, curses his fate and the harsh customs which bind him down, when he sees his child reduced to such a condition. A few figures will show

the extent of the evils and the harms they produce. In 1891 there were amongst Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists 89,051 boys below the age of 4 who were married and 223,560 married girls of the same age. The number of widows below the age of 4 was 10,641. The number of married boys between 5 and 9 years of age is nearly 6 lakhs and two thousand and that of girls over 18½ lakhs. The total number of married males below the age of 14 is 2,725,124 and that of girls is 6,871,999. The number of widows between 5 and 9 years of age is 52,759 and of those between 10 and 14 years of age is 143,100. Of these 2 lakhs and more of widows below the age of 14 all but some 4 thousand are Hindus proper.

These evils are recognized by almost all educated and thinking persons, whether they belong to the old or to the new school. But while the Progressive party urge that active steps should be taken for removing them by altering the existing customs, the orthodox party resist their demands as untenable on the ground that they are opposed to religion.

The reform advocated is mainly on the following lines :—

(1) Option of marriage to be allowed to women in the same way as to men.

(2) No girl to be married before 18 or at the earliest 16.

(3) No man to be married till he is at least 20, and in no case till he is able to maintain himself and his family.

(4) Abolition of customs which bring about unnecessary expenditure on occasions of marriage.

(5) Removal of the religious and social prohibition against the re-marriage of a widow and the recognition of her claim to be socially treated in the same way as any other married woman of her caste.

As things stand, the greatest difficulty is about the general acceptance of the changes set forth in points 1 ,2, 3 and 5.

One of the features common to all the innumerable castes and sub-castes into which the Hindus are divided, is the firm acceptance of the doctrine that marriage is absolutely necessary in the case of a female. Amongst the higher castes, *i. e.*, those who are comprised under the three original main castes of Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas there is another common feature and that is the prohibition of the remarriage of a widow. The feeling against widow remarriage amongst the members of these castes is so great that even amongst seceders and dissenters from orthodox Hinduism like the Jains (who are classed amongst Vaishyas) there is the same horror of women's contracting a second marriage as amongst Brahmins and Kshatriyas. Nay, in the Shudras amongst whom widow remarriage is recognized and considered lawful, the general sense of the community, whatever the law might lay down, accords a much lower status to a remarried widow than to a woman who was married when she was a virgin.

The Progressive party, while anxious for the removal of evils, are conscious that no change which is not supported by authority or precedent has any chance of being considered by their countrymen. Their efforts have, therefore, been directed towards such only as can receive these supports. In spite, however, of this attitude of theirs, they have not yet succeeded in securing the acceptance of their proposals by the majority of the Hindus. They believe, however, that reason and justice are on their side and they expect to win their battle by the weapons drawn from the ancient scriptures and ancient history.

In regard to compulsory and early marriage the position of the orthodox party is this. There are certain

sacraments ordained as necessary for every person male or female. In the case of males of the three regenerate classes, this necessary sacrament is the Upanayana or Thread Ceremony. For females and Shudras the place of this necessary sacrament is supplied by marriage. Relying on a text contended to be that of Ashwalâyana, one of the highest authorities on ceremonial law, it is advanced that certain ceremonies constituting the consummation of marriage must be performed immediately after a young woman attains puberty. Great reliance is also placed on various texts and dicta of writers of eminence laying down that the father of a girl who attains puberty before marriage goes to hell. The chief recognized text is from Pârâshara which says "a girl in her eighth year is a Gauri, in her ninth year a Rohini, in her tenth year a Kanya and above that a Rajaswalâ. The giving in marriage of a Gauri will lead to Nâk (the celestial region belonging to Indra), of a Rohini to Vaikuntha (the one belonging to Vishnu), of a Kanya to Brahmaloka and a Rajaswalâ to hell." The prevailing and accepted belief is that no Hindu can, without imperilling the future of his soul, keep his daughter unmarried after puberty. The social penalty for the disregard of this injunction is excommunication, perhaps the severest punishment which a community can inflict.

On the other hand, the advocates of reform urge that there is no Vedic text or anything in the works of any of the Smriti writers except the one attributed to Ashwalâyana, which some question as spurious, which lays down that every girl ought to be married and the marriage consummated at the very first appearance of womanhood. Passages from Manu and other authorities of equal position are pointed out by them as distinctly opposed to the alleged heinousness of keeping a girl unmarried at puberty. One passage of Manu states that a girl is to wait for

three years after attainment of puberty to see if her fath gets her married. If he does not, then at the end of th period, she may look out for a suitable husband for hers and select and marry one. Baudháyana states similarl This, it is urged with great force, evidently means that girl does not lose her caste or social position by being ke unmarried after puberty. The great medical authori Sushruta says : "A woman is considered to be a child ti the sixteenth year of her age and afterwards to be in h youth till the thirty-second year. If a man of less tha 25 years begets a child on a woman of less than 16 year it remains in the womb. If it is born it does not live lon and if it lives at all, it is weak."

It deserves to be noted that in ancient times not onl was it not considered necessary to marry women befor puberty, but at times they even remained unmarrie their whole life. The names and memory of the Brahma vadinis, Gargi Vâchaknavi, Sulábhâ Maitreyi, Vadav Pratitheyi, who never married at all, and passed thei whole life in celibacy are still regarded with veneration by the most orthodox Hindus. Judging from the instance of Draupadi, Shakuntalâ, Damayanti and several others it would seem that it was quite an ordinary thing for girls to remain unmarried till considerably after they attained the years of discretion. The orthodox party urge tha the instances are all those of women of the Kshatriya caste To this the other side reply that the laws of marriage are the same for all the three regenerate classes.

The facts stand thus : Formerly it was as much in the option of women as of men to marry or not to marry and the tie itself was contracted generally after the attainment of the years of discretion. The sentiment of the community, however, became changed in course of time and not only did the old practice of women remaining unmarried or marrying considerably after they came of age fall into

disuetude, but it came to be regarded that it was unallowable for women to pass an unmarried life and further that they ought to be married before they reach puberty. This accounts for the apparently conflicting texts and dicta to be found in works on ceremonial law.

There can be no question that the prohibition of the remarriage of widows is of comparatively recent origin. Manu says :—

> नष्टे मृते प्रव्रजिते क्लीबेचपतिते पतौ ।
> पंचत्स्वापत्सु नारीणां पतिरन्यों विधीयते ॥

"If the husband has disappeared and cannot be found, if he is dead, if he is banished or is neuter or becomes an outcaste; in the case of the occurrence of these five misfortunes a second husband is ordained for women."

The same or similar permission is accorded in the Smritis of Nârada and Pârâshara. About the comparative authority of the Smriti writers the orthodox rule is कलौपाराशरस्मृतिः (the Smriti of Pârâshara is the guiding authority in the [illegible] age i.e., the present age). Kâtyâyana, Vasistha, Shâta[illegible] that [illegible] accord this permission to women whose [illegible]ge was not consummated. All the same there is the recognition of the right of a woman who has lost her husband to contract a second marriage. And yet there is no matter which the orthodox regard with greater horror than the remarriage of widows. Neither the weight of authorities, nor the accordance of the demand with the principles of natural justice, nor compassion for the hard fate of the child widow, seems to diminish that horror.

Amongst the three regenerate classes, or rather amongst Hindus who do not belong to the Shudra caste, both the widow who contracts a remarriage, as also the man who marries her, [illegible] considered as degraded, polluted and as having lost caste. [illegible] is not permissible to eat food

prepared or touched by them; nay, it is not allowed, what in English would be called, to dine with them at the same table. Those who dine with them are excommunicated. At one time even those who attended a remarriage were subjected to the same penalty. The very sight of a remarried woman is regarded with aversion. The orthodox will condone a widow however scandalously she misbehaves herself if she makes penance; but a remarried woman as also her husband are beyond the pale of the most extreme penance. Shunned in life they are execrated after death. Still more wonderful, these sentiments are more strongly held by women than by men. One of the main reasons which is at the bottom of this is, the extreme reverence in which the husband is held by the wife, whose highest conception of womanly dignity and felicity is to be united with her husband not only in her life time but after her death also.

Whatever the origin, the sentiment is there. A mother who is grieving over the widowhood of h[illegible] child, if asked whether she would agree to her rem[illegible] would, in the majority of cases, unhesita[illegible] would rather wish the child were dead than remar[illegible]

Though there is a mass of authorities and historical instances in support of widow remarriage, the obstacles in the path of its recognition by the community generally are far greater than in that of late marriages. Even amongst Shudras in certain sub-sections widow remarriage is considered prohibited. The ordinary Kunbis also amongst whom it is permitted look upon a *Pát* wife (a woman married after she became a widow) as lower in status and dignity than other married women who were married virgins. Though our Courts have accorded to the son by a *Pát* wife the same rights as to the son by the *Lagna* wife, it is well known that amongs[t] the higher sections of the Shudras at any rate, the son by the *Lagna* wife is ac-

corded precedence in all social and religious matters over the sons by the *Pât* wife. Some even go to the length of questioning the right of the *Pât* wife's sons to inheritance when there are sons from a *Lagna* wife.

It cannot be determined with any degree of exactness from what time compulsory marriage before puberty and enforced widowhood came into vogue. Nor is it known whether any efforts were made to remove these evils, or any protest raised against them till the last century. In the last quarter of that century, however, the injustice of enforced widowhood roused the attention of the Maratha Brahmins, then the most prominent section of the nation not only in literary and speculative matters but in politics and military achievements also. The daughter of Parashuram Pant Bhau Patwardhan, the General of the Peshwa having become a widow when she was a mere girl and had not reached womanhood, the father moved by her misery resolved to make a bold attempt to shake off, if possible, the trammels which pitiless custom had imposed, and with that object placed the question of the validity of the remarriage of child-widows before the Pandits of Benares, which was then as now and for thousands of years past the chief seat of Hindu learning. The Pandits who were asked to examine the authorities gave their opinion in favour of the validity of such marriages. It is not known exactly why Parashram Pant Bhau did not, in spite of this favourable reply of the Pandits, translate his desire into action. They say his political allies and superiors pointed out to him that though the Shastras might be on his side, popular sentiment and prejudices were so strong in this matter that it would not be safe to the State, considering the circumstances under which it was placed, embarking on the experiment he was trying. And thus, we are told ended the matter. Nothing is heard further of the woes of the unfortunate widows till the time of Rajah Ram

Mohan Roy. But he even was not able to accomplish anything; and it is not till nearly half the nineteenth century is passed that we find anything worth mentioning accomplished towards the amelioration of the condition of widows. In 1853 was passed the measure which would stand as a landmark in the history of Social Reform in India—the Act to validate the remarriage of widows. It is beyond question that that Act gave great offence to the orthodox community of Bengal and of such of the important places in the Presidencies of Bombay and Madras where education had made any progress. But it is more than doubtful, whether its scope and object, or its very existence even, was known elsewhere for years and years. Persons anxious to minimize the responsibility which attaches to the high-handed policy of Lord Dalhousie in political matters, attribute to this and one or two more acts of his administration indicative of his sympathy with the progressive party, some share in the general opposition to the British administration which expressed itself in the catastrophe of 1857. But this position can well be controverted, and shown to be incorrect.

With the legalisation of widow remarriage the greatest difficulty in the path of the Reform party was removed. But it was some years before the first Brahmin widow remarriage could be brought about. The validity of remarriage among the three higher castes according to the Shastras was discussed in a conclave of learned persons presided over by the Shankaracharya. Both sides claimed victory. All the same the opposition of the people as a whole was most pronounced. The widow remarriage party were subjected to every possible form of persecution. The cause however did not die, but thrived and made progress slow though it was. It is true that the number of these marriages is small, and a remarried widow is not still admitted fully in society, and she and her husband are subjected

to numerous annoyances and put to great inconvenience. But when the present attitude of the orthodox party is compared with the active warfare carried on against them with the weapons of persecution and vilification only thirty years ago, the tone of optimism which pervades the writings and speeches of some of the leaders of the Reform movement appears perfectly justifiable.

The organized efforts made to raise the marriageable age of girls, if later than the remarriage movement, have, on the other hand, roused less violent opposition and have received a greater measure of success. Thirty years ago the age at which most girls were married amongst the Brahmins south of the Narmadâ was 7 or 8. It has now gone up to 10 and 12. Even the latter limit has in numerous cases been exceeded by a year or so by orthodox people without any reproach from their community. In Mysore the movement against infant marriages can show results hardly to be expected in British India. Being supported by an enlightened ruler and a sympathetic minister, it was able without much difficulty to obtain recognition from the Acharyas (the spiritual heads of the different sections of the community) and encountered less formidable opposition than it would have done otherwise. Proceeding cautiously, the Mysore Government first ascertained whether the general sense of the people was in favour of progress or against it, and when it was satisfied from the proceedings which took place in the Representative Assembly in 1892 that there was a fairly large volume of public opinion behind it, it introduced and in 1894 passed a Bill regulating the age of marriage, which prohibits under pain of criminal prosecution the marriage of girls below the age of 8, and of men above the age of 55 to girls below the age of 14. In the regulation as passed there is no minimum limit for boys. Some ardent reformers may not regard the results achieved as remarkable or even satisfactory. But when it is borne

in mind that the heads of all the three great divisions of Brahmins, the Smárta, Mádhva and Ramanuja sects have laid down that 10 is the proper age and marriages below 8 are sinful, that is a matter of no small moment where there are 232,276 girls below the age of 4 who are married or are widows and 1,904,915 between the ages of 5 and 9. Equally valuable is the measure as a precedent to be followed by the other Indian States if not by the British Government.

A few years later two Bills were prepared, one by the Hon'ble Mr. Jambulingam Mudaliar and the other by the Hon'ble Mr. Ratnasabhapaty Pillai of the Madras Legislative Council, for obtaining a similar enactment for the Hindus of the Madras Presidency generally. But there is no likelihood of proposals for the introduction of measures of this kind being entertained by the British Government, unless the demand comes from the majority of the people. The extent to which the British Government would interfere in matters connected with the religious observances and social customs of the people of this country, has been over and over again authoritatively laid down, and was restated only the other day by the present Viceroy. The regulation of the age of marriage is a matter which is clearly outside that sphere, unless the bulk of the people desire legislative sanction for what they have come to agree amongst themselves. The right and duty of the Government to take suitable action in a matter like that covered by the Age of Consent Bill stands on a different footing. Besides, the social controversies of the last sixteen years have satisfied many members of the party of progress who were first disposed to welcome outside help, particularly that of Government, that any proffer of such help or any demand for it, far from furthering the cause of progress, distinctly retards it by injuring the susceptibilities of the people and rousing their suspicions.

The administrations of the Native States occupy a more advantageous position in this respect, and an enlightened policy, calculated to educate public opinion and give effect to reforms proceeding on the lines of least resistance, if adopted by them is far less likely to encounter active hostility than any similar measure of the Government of India. The Baroda Government in 1893 formulated certain proposals of a purely permissive character in regard to marriage reform, but these were abandoned later on. It is trusted that this does not betoken an intention on the part of that State to leave social reform severely alone.

But whether in British India or in Native States, the great factor, the one on which chief reliance has to be placed, for bringing about the desired transformation, is the education of public opinion. According to the strict letter of the text of Parashara every Hindu father who gives his daughter in marriage after the tenth year goes to hell. Numerous fathers, who claim to be orthodox and are treated as such, commit this heinous sin of marrying their daughters after the age of 10, and yet they are not excommunicated or subjected to any social inconvenience. Of the Hindu female population between the ages of 10 and 14 over 38½ lakhs are unmarried. Taking the higher castes among whom this rule prevails to be only 8 per cent. of the total Hindu population, there would be 3 lakhs unmarried girls between the ages of 10 and 14 belonging to these classes. The plain inference to be deduced from this is that the injunction about marrying a girl before she completed her tenth year is not in practice at least regarded as mandatory. If all the reformers 'hot and cold' instead of carping at each other, were to combine, would they not be able to obtain a similar relaxation in regard to the injunction about the marriage of girls before puberty? Amongst the Nambudri Brahmins of Malabar, who are most staunch in their orthodoxy, it is permissible

to defer marriages of girls till after the attainment of womanhood. Amongst the Kulin Brahmins of Bengal the same thing exists. Among the Patane Prabhus of Bombay, and among the Mudaliar and other castes of the Madras Presidency claiming to hold an intermediate position between Kshatriyas and Shudras, the general practice is to marry girls after the age of 12. The position of the advocates of change is that it is beyond question that our forefathers exercised the right, which every community has, of altering their customs and institutions according to change of circumstances to bring them into conformity with their notions of what was proper or improper. If in doing so they could not be considered transgressors of religion and law, it would hardly be just to regard as irreligious the proposals of those who after all are merely asking for a return to the earlier and better traditions of their race.

The change can be effected by the community alone. No compulsion from outside is feasible or desirable. It would be unprofitable to go into the controversies which were raised by the Age of Consent Bill or Mr. Malabari's proposals. At present there is certainly no proposal which calls for the legislative or executive action of Government. The appeal is to the community. As in all matters so in this, neither the formation of correct opinions nor their articulate expression, nor the devising of methods for putting them into practice, can be expected from the masses. It is on the leaders that this task devolves. It is the duty of men of light and leading, of thought and reason, of culture and refinement.

The question naturally arises who are these men of light and leading and what is the recognition to be extended to the numerous spiritual heads (Gurus, Swamis, Maharajas or whatever else they be called) of the different sections and sub-sections of the community. It is not claimed for a moment that thought, reason or culture is con-

fined to the recipients of western education merely. But it is submitted that no one, whatever stores of bookish lore he may have laid by, can justly claim to possess these, who blindly and without examination accepts a thing on the principle of *scriptum est*, who declines to consider the justice or injustice, propriety or impropriety of existing institutions and customs, forbidding his reason to sit in judgment on them to determine whether they are harmful or serve any useful purpose, whose imagination is not fired and whose sympathies are not moved by the spectacle of the misery he sees around him, misery which is self-inflicted and is preventible. It is devoutly to be wished that all angry recriminations about hot reformers and cold reformers will cease, and that all reference about past controversies, about Government interference be avoided and that both those who advocate action from within and those who demand help from without will combine and devote their energies to obtain the recognition and acceptance of the principles which they hold in common.

The attitude of the Acharyas except in one or two matters has not been such as to encourage the Progressive party in expecting help from them in the solution of the great problem of social reform. It is, therefore, natural that there should be among them if not a disposition to ignore these dignitaries, at any rate an indifference to secure their co-operation. It is not the reform party alone who do not attach great value to the authority of the Acharyas. The orthodox party are as prompt in questioning it whenever any of these spiritual heads show any disposition to make a concession to the demand for reform. Their position is, it is true, rather anomalous. But it is sincerely hoped that they and all people of the orthodox party will study the signs of the times and show a more liberal and sympathetic spirit to remedy admitted grievances than they have done till now. The cause of progress

will not wait for them. By their uncompromising opposition to it, it is their position which is being imperilled.

For the extravagance in marriage expenditure no blame attaches to the Shastras, and it is custom and the innate vanity of man which is responsible for it. There being no difficulties about the Shastras to be overcome in this matter, one would have thought that reform here would be easily accomplished. But except in certain places and in certain sections, where the evil had reached extraordinary proportions, little change is noticeable. On the contrary the expensiveness of marriage has increased in almost all grades of the community, particularly in the middle and well-to-do classes during the last thirty years.

Formerly there were intermarriages between the four castes—the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras—with certain restrictions. A Brahmin could marry a Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya or Shudra woman, and a Kshatriya could marry a Kshatriya, Vaishya or Shudra wife and so on; and the issues by all the marriages were legitimate and the wives all lawfully married. This was Anuloma (अनुलोम) marriage. But if a woman of a higher caste married a man of a lower caste, it was Pratiloma (प्रातलोम) or a mesalliance. But though reprobated, such marriages were not unlawful. Devayani's marriage with Yayati was never questioned. When and how this old system disappeared it is not easy to say. We have the fact that in he present day, the restrictions on marriage have become absurdly unreasonable and intolerable. Not only has not intermarriage between the original four main castes gone out of fashion, but persons belonging to the different subsections of the same caste cannot intermarry without danger of social ostracism and reprobation. For instance, the three main sections of the Maharashtra Brahmins, Deshastha, Konkanastha, Karhada—do no not intermarry.

Among the Deshasthas again, the Rigvedis, Madhyandinis, Kanvas, Maitrayanis cannot intermarry. The same is the case between the Madhvas, Smartas and Ramanujas in Southern India, the Nagars and the Audich and other Brahmins in Guzerat, the Kashmiris, Saraswats, Kanyakubjas, &c., in Northern India; the Shenavis and the western coast Saraswats in Western India. From the original four castes have sprung the present thousand and one castes ranking below the Brahmins and sub-castes. These numerous castes and their sections observe similar prohibitions in regard to intermarriages with sections of equal rank. The result is, restriction in the field of choice, creation of unnecessary difficulties and increase in marriage expenditure. The change advocated and which is the only one practicable is intermarriage between those different sub-sections of a caste which interdine. How difficult to move Indian society is, is shown by what has happened in regard to this matter. Deshastha's, Konkanasthas and Karhadas were some years ago allowed to intermarry by one of the Shankaracharyas, yet no action has followed this edict. In the last century some progress was sought to be made in this matter by the Maharastra Brahmins. Bajirao I had a Deshastha wife. But it does not appear that any other marriages of that kind took place.

Even dissenters from orthodox Hinduism have not escaped this influence. The Lingayats, who ought according to the theory of their religion to be all on a footing of equality, are as strict in their observance of prohibitions against intermarriage between different sub-sections as the orthodox people. The same thing is to be seen amongst Jains. What is still more wonderful is that even converts to Christianity observe in some places caste distinctions in regard to marriage almost as rigorously as the Hindus.

Prejudice against mesalliances is common both to the East and the West. To expect the total removal of

all restrictions in regard to class in the matter of marriage is to expect an impossibility. It is not only against Indian nature but against human nature. Confining our efforts to the domain of the practicable, our action should be directed to the bringing about of inter-marriage between the sub-sections of the chief castes as now existing.

In this matter it is not the Shastraic ordinances which have to be surmounted but custom. But unreasoning custom is as difficult to change as any practice sanctified by express text of law.

To polygamy and to Kulinism the most serious form in which it exists, a passing reference only can be made. Polygamy though permitted by the Shastras is nowhere except in Bengal a serious evil. The number of men with more than one wife is in the other parts of India very small. But in Bengal among the Kulin Brahmins its extent and magnitude are even now shocking. Twenty, thirty, forty, sixty, eighty and even hundred women married to one man who seldom sees the majority of them for years as they are left to pine at their paternal houses by the husband who exacted the payment of large sums for condescending to marry and whose few and far between visits can only be obtained by the inducement of fresh presents for every such visit, ought to be a matter of great regret and humiliation to any civilized people. In 1866 an attempt was made to obtain its prohibition by law. But after a very careful and sympathetic enquiry it had to be abandoned as impracticable, unless the Government was prepared to make a departure from its settled policy, which it was not.

The Shastras do not permit the supersession of a wife by her husband except under very special circumstances. It is submitted that the reform party ought to take an even higher stand and agitate for the establishment of the principle that no man should marry another wife while one is living or continues united to him in marriage.

Education and the juster appreciation of right and wrong which flows from it are producing their effect, and even the polygamy of the Kulins is decreasing. The Polyandrous tribes who are coming under the operation of these beneficent influences, and the Malabar Marriage Bill testify to the acceptance by the enlightened persons among them of a higher ideal of family life. On the Aryans the descendants of the old Rishis and the valiant warriors who created, spread and developed civilization in this vast land is imposed the sacred duty of restoring and enforcing the lofty views of life and duty enunciated by the great men of their race. The cause of reform is the cause of justice, of righteousness, of humanity. Shall we tolerate unequal laws? Shall we, while claiming every sort of liberty and license for men, impose upon women restrictions and disabilities productive of the utmost misery and degradation in too many cases? On our reply to this and cognate questions, and the attitude we adopt towards them depends the future of our race. If we want to recover our former greatness, we must set high in the sanctuary of our heart the goddess of truth and justice and paying entire devotion to her and vowing undivided homage to her, consecrate ourselves to establish her sway both in our houses and in our country in social matters as in political matters.

VIII. Foreign Travel.

BY PUNDIT BISHAN NARAYAN DAR,

Barrister-at-Law, Lucknow.

The question of foreign travel has, of late, come to assume considerable importance in the eyes of thoughtful Indians, because of the serious bearings it is felt to have on some vital and pressing problems of Indian life. It has many aspects each of which deserves a close and careful study. On its moral and mental side the movement of foreign travel—the going out of Indians into strange countries, among strange peoples, possessing strange civilizations—is obviously closely connected with the great problem of our National Education. On its political side, it cannot but seriously modify our conceptions regarding the functions of Government and the rights of citizenship by giving us real and living examples of societies which have fashioned and perfected their political institutions upon models very different from those which have dominated the whole course of Asiatic history. On what may be called its commercial side it must in course of time, by enlarging our knowledge of the world, suggest to our minds new means and appliances for augmenting our material resources and stimulating our industrial activity. So then, if civilization is another name for the net result of mental, moral, political, and industrial activities, the question of foreign travel is intimately connected with the greater question of our national progress. In the following pages an attempt will be made to discuss the question in the light in which I have put it here—to see how the movement of travelling and sojourning of Indians in foreign countries has arisen, what are its tendencies, immediate and ultimate, good and evil, what is the relative significance of each of its various aspects, in what way it affects our pre-

sent national revival, and what should be the attitude of an educated Hindu towards it. I purposely say 'an educated Hindu,' for an educated Mahomedan, whatever else may keep him back from sea-voyage, is happily free from the restraints of 'caste' which is the greatest barrier against foreign travel in the case of every Hindu, whether of the old school or of the new.

There is a sense in which foreign travel is no new thing to us. Ancient India had commercial intercourse with other countries. The Indians traded with Babylon in the seventh century B. C. In the 10th century B. C. the ivory of Solomon's throne, his precious stones and peacocks, and the sandalwood pillars of his temple, have been ascribed by competent authorities to an Indian origin. Early in the 10th century A. D. the products and art-works of India were seen in the court and palaces of the Caliphs of Bagdad. "Four elephants caparisoned in peacock silk stood at the palace gate, and on the back of each were eight men of Sind."* During the Mahomedan period foreign travel assumed a new aspect. The Hindus rarely if ever went beyond Afghanistan and Cashmere; but the Mahomedan settlers kept up their connection with their homes in Persia, Central Asia, and Arabia. In these times general insecurity was the order of the day and facilities of communication were unknown. One province of India was foreign to another, and it was more difficult and risky then to travel from Lucknow to Delhi than it is now for Cook's tourists to go round the globe. Caste, too long before the Mahomedans came, had tightened its hold upon the Hindu race, and the traditions of the great days of Asoka and Chandragupta had been forgotten. Still among the Mahomedan population there was a large element of those who either belonged to foreign countries or had visited them. But except in certain superficial

* Hunter's History of British India, Vol. I.

aspects this slight connection of India with the outerworld does not seem to have produced any appreciable effect upon the life of its people. Indeed this connection became less and less and in course of time entirely ceased. How is it then that the Mahomedans though foreigners themselves and unrestrained by any caste rules did not keep up and encourage intercourse with other countries? But we may go much further back and ask how is it that the Hindus, who too were at one time foreigners in India, did not keep up connection wish their home in Central Asia and after a time shut their doors to all foreigners? For both questions in their broad and important features may be answered together.

In order to understand the early conservatism to which the prejudice against foreign intercourse was due, we must for a time put aside some of the axioms of modern times and try, as far as possible, to realize in our imaginations the circumstances in which the older societies had to carry on their struggle for existence and the conditions under which success was then possible. Somebody has spoken of a 'pre-economic age,' an age when the postulates of political economy were not true and had no existence; when labour and capital were not transferable, because the occupations were hereditary; transferable capital was scanty, and Government was unstable; when free-trade and competitions would have been the ruin of the society which adopted them. There was undoubtedly a 'preliminary age' in the life of mankind where not only the principles of modern political economy but many other principles and axioms had no application—indeed when the very contrary principles seem to have been good for men. In primitive societies when human nature was being formed, when human groups were loose and unorganized, when the struggle for existence was fierce and tribal feuds were carried on without giving or taking quarters, the

first care of nations was to live; and then the question of national defence was considered at least as important as, by a curious recrudescence of past savagery, it has come to be considered by some of the great world-powers of our day. In a fighting age militancy was necessary and inevitable. For military success organization was the one thing needful. To heat the loose and incoherent atoms of a tribe into a compact and coherent whole, isolation of tribe from tribe was necessary, the irresistible power of the tribal chief was necessary, inter-tribal hatred was necessary, the supreme duty of revenge was necessary. No tribe could afford to allow its members to form friendly relations with other tribes, to trade with them, or to go among them, for in those days to go to another tribe was to be lost to one's own. It has been said by a hero* of modern times that "what one nation hates is another nation." In early times international hatred was one of the preservations of natural existence. If a tribe discovered a fertile tract of land, provided itself with some means of existence, invented some implements of war and industry, it was not to its advantage that the neighbouring tribes should know it, for those were not the days of commercial treaties and international alliances, but of force and violence, when the ultimate question between man and man was, as Carlyle has said in his own graphic way, "canst thou kill me, or can I kill thee?" and when therefore a rich tribe for instance, if it allowed its riches to be known to other tribes, would have at once excited their cupidity and been plundered by them without any ceremony. Isolation and exclusiveness were then a necessity, intercourse with foreigners would have brought on national ruin.

In India this stage—this "preliminary period"—had passed long ago, when after a long interval during which it developed a noble civilization the light of which not only

* Napoleon.

blazes in what has been called 'the Vedic Arcadia,' but sends its reflection even to us across the long night of centuries and through the glare of gas and electricity, a relapse took place; civilization became stationary and after a time took a retrogressive and downward course. It was then that a period came which in its marked features resembled the Mahomedan period, and indeed immediately preceded it. The militant type of society revived; the larger Hindu states were split up into smaller kingdoms and principalities, feudal institutions came into existence and tribal jealousies and sectarian hatred became the order of the day. A selfish priesthood imposed its yoke upon the neck of the people; custom fixed and stereotyped the course of national life; caste system elaborated its net in the meshes of which were caught all the elements of progress and advancement. And the worst of it was that it took place at a time when the necessity for isolation, for religious and political autocracy and for the fixed and hereditary divisions and distinctions of classes and occupations was losing its importance, when other nations were entering upon their career of progress. When from this stationary stage they were passing into that in which those ideas and institutions began feebly and faintly to manifest themselves which have through a long course of centuries fashioned and perfected what is now called modern civilization, the Hindus locked themselves up within the four corners of India, cut off all foreign intercourse by interdicting foreign travel, and instead of profiting by what men were doing in other parts of the globe, began to forget, and finally did forget, what they themselves had done in other days. It was at this time that knowledge became the monopoly of a special class, that the political life was sapped by the extending sway of ecclesiastical pretensions, and that the seeds of racial and sectarian animosities were sown, which corroded the society from within and brought down

upon it foreign invasions from without. These were the dark ages of Indian history; and though for a time the meteosnic light of Mahomedan civilization shone through them, yet the religious fervour and the conquering zeal which in its earlier days carried the banner and the culture of Islam into so many lands proved in the end inconstant and evanescent, and the spirit of reaction and retrogression marked the Mahomedan *regime* as it had marked the Hindu *regime*. It is to this long unhappy passage of our national life that the words of Dr. Arnold fitly apply. "Well, indeed, might the policy of the old priest-nobles of Egypt and India endeavour to divert their people from becoming familiar with the sea, and represent the occupation of a seaman as incompatible with the purity of the highest castes. The sea deserved to be hated by the old aristocracies, inasmuch as it has been the mightiest instrument in the civilization of mankind."

So, then, although there is evidence to show that there was commercial intercourse between India and other countries during the last two thousand years, yet it could not have been much; and the testimony of history is on this point verified by our knowledge of the state of Indian society as it then was. The love of travelling—of moving about from land to land, among strange people and novel scenes inborn of the spirit of advention, which itself has for its principal ingredients, intellectual curiosity and political enterprise. In Europe, for example, the Revival of learning in the fifteenth century, gave a most powerful impulse to intellectual curiosity; the discovery of America raised to a white heat the spirit of political enterprise; and the combined effect of both these great events of modern history, may be seen in the commercial activity and the passion for travelling and discovering new lands, which sprang up. In India there was no intellectual curiosity and no political enterprise. Despotism in politics

had crushed the political spirit of the people; despotism in religion had enslaved their intellect. Simple wants easily satisfied, had become sanctified by an ascetic system of morality and caste by tying down everybody to his hereditary *status* had paralysed the energy of undivided effort and destroyed the feeling of the dignity of manhood. Foreign intercourse was not encouraged by the state which was unstable and despotic, nor by the sanity which was priest-ridden and conservative. The passion for travelling was absent because neither intellectual unrest nor political ambition was there to feed its flames.

With the advent of the English in India a new epoch began. Since the movement of 'foreign travel' is to my mind a necessary and inevitable consequence of changes wrought by English or European influences in our life and thought, it will not be out of place to summarise these here. And in order to understand the new *regime* we must have a clear idea as to what the old *regime* was. In politcis the principles of heredity and divine right were dominant. The people had no voice or choice in Government and the ruler was the absolute master of their fate. In religion the priest was the keeper of the national conscience; empty forms and practices had dimmed if not destroyed the purity of the ancient faith, and false and forged traditions formed the staple of popular beliefs. Religious dissent or doubt was a sin of the deepest dye, and the business of 'fire-insurance' by making the sinners pay in silver and gold in order to escape hell was as brisk as in the worst days of the Catholic Church. In morality the ascetic principle reigned supreme; but human nature avenged itself now and then by revealing in the character of the priests and moral preceptors the worst types of humanity. Caste and custom were the regulators of social matters. Domesticlife was governed by the patriarchal authority; women and children had no status but were

treated by the patriarch like his goods and chattels. Men were not wanting in fine traits of personal character in the virtues of tenderness, affection, sympathy, generosity, and truthfulness, but the patriotic sentiment was unknown, because the national sentiment did not exist: men felt allegiance to their caste or sect or tribe or class; but the larger and wider feeling of nationality embracing the whole country they did not possess. The forces of law and order were weak; the insecurity of life and property had nearly killed the motive for the production and accumulation of wealth, and given ascendancy to military pursuits and occupation over every thing else; and consequently industrial activity was at a low ebb, and all impulse for the cultivation of knowledge and arts was from the national mind withdrawn. This is a sufficiently dark picture of the India of the pre-English era; but it had many redeeming features also which I have omitted to mention here because they are not quite relevant to my argument.

Turn we now to the new *regime.* The greatest change has been the change of Government; for the new Government popular in principle, half despotic in practice, carried on by a free people in a country where freedom has been unknown—embodies all those forces of modern civilization which are, in a thousand ways, moulding, modifying, transforming our national life. This intellectual awakening of India began long before Lord Bentinck; but since his day it has been going on with unprecedented vigour and rapidity. In the beginning of this century the influence of European knowledge and arts had begun to make itself felt among the cultured classes in some parts of India, more particularly in Bengal where the beginnings of the great reform movement the Brahmo Samaj were laid by the immortal Raja Ram Mohan Roy. the first Indian who crossed the sea and visited England. He was powerfully influenced by the new civilization which Englishmen

had brought and his example influenced many active and powerful minds among his own countrymen. The Indian Renaissance thus begun, was greatly aided and stimulated by the educational and political measures of Metcalfe and Bentinck; the introduction of higher education in public schools and colleges, the recognition of the principle of freedom in speech and in the press and in religion, created in the literary classes a passion for learning and study such as since the revival of letters has hardly ever been equalled and perhaps never surpassed. "I go to awake the dead" said a scholar of the fifteenth century, and it was in this spirit that men turned to the study of English literature, science and arts; but as in Europe men were more fascinated by the literary beauties and graces of the ancient masters, than by their science and philosophy; so in this country while scientific culture did not at first seem to have much attraction for scholars, literary education came to be prosecuted with remarkable ardour and enthusiasm. The institution of public education distroyed the monopoly of knowledge by any privileged caste or class, and diffused the taste and the desire for mental culture through every grade of society. In the intellectual ferment which followed, the old order began to give away beneath the dissolving agencies of thought and change. The Indian intellect after a long time of captivity was emancipated and brought back to the warm precincts of the cheerful day, and began to assert itself in all those spheres from which it had been kept out by rulers and priests. Intellectual curiosity was born, and so also was the spirit of political ambition born, for English literature and English history gave the Indians new conceptions of citizenship and new ideals of life, they felt for the first time free to follow any occupation they chose, and capable of rising to any position by dint of merit. Those who loved English literature became naturally eager to know the home of

English literature. Those whose minds were fascinated by European arts and inventions and to whom European civilization had opened a new world of interest and delight, could not long resist the seductive influence of European ideas, tastes, habits, and modes of life.

The spell of the past was broken. New vistas of progress were opened. Ardent minds were stirred to their very depth, and then stood clear on high before their bewildered gaze the vision of a new and brighter era yet to come. Of this re-awakened India we may fitly speak in the words of Shelley.

> " The world's great age begins anew
> The golden years return ;
> The earth doth like a snake renew
> Her winter weeds outworn
> Heaven smiles ; and faiths and Empire gleam
> Like wrecks of a disclosing dream."

It was this revolt of the Indian intellect against the old —this passionate longing for the new—which was at once the symbol and the precursor of those changes which led to the readjustment of our ideas and institutions to the needs of modern life, and as a weenary consequence called into being those agencies which have tended to serve this end. One of those agencies was the movement of 'foreign travel.' It was inevitable, and it came. It was, as it has been already remarked, Rajah Ram Mohan Roy who by an inspiration of genius anticipated the hopes and ideals of a later age ; the small grain of mustard seed sown by him has in the course of half-century grown into a mighty tree. Its importance cannot be properly appreciated unless we realise the new circumstances in which we are placed.

The influence of Western culture is now in the ascendant, and the English are its apostles in this country. It is obvious that our progress and prosperity, in the sense in

which they are understood now, depend to a considerable extent upon our acquiring those arts and sciences, and assimilating that spirit of action and enterprise, by which the English themselves have risen. There is no other road to national welfare except perhaps that pointed out by Theosophy and esoteric Buddhism, which however the nation does not for the present seem disposed to adopt. In these days knowledge is power; and under English dominion the rule of the sword has been partially superseded by that of opinion. And here comes in our difficulty. In the past we could wield the sword quite as well as the ruling class, who possessed no marked intellectual superiority over us and from whom we were not divided by any wide gulf of social differences. Those days are passed. Every thing has become complicated, requiring intense mental strain. "We were in simple addition, we *are* in the differential calculus." Now we are governed by a people who are decidedly superior to us both in the arts of war and peace, who, if they cannot beat us hollow in pure speculation, in religion and morality, do yet possess an amount of verified knowledge, a mass of facts, tested, asserted, kept ready for practical use, and an armoury of mechanical inventions which are simply astounding and bewildering to the Asiatic mind, and which give their possessor an undisputed superiority over us in all the practical concerns of life. These superior people govern us, and their Government is a sort of constitutional Government in which knowledge and intelligence play an important part. In its counsels opinion counts for much, but it must be not only an informed and enlightened opinion, but so markedly so, that our rulers may also admit it to be informed and enlightened. For superior people are apt to despise their inferiors and care little for their opinion—and this is true of the English in their attitude towards our public opinion—unless those opinions are so unmistakably sound and clear that no

honest mind can refuse to consider them. And thus while a premium is placed upon knowledge and intelligence, we are forced to compete in the intellectual sphere, if we want to improve our political *status*, with an intellectually superior race.

We must, if we are eager for place and power in the administration of our country, acquire that culture which alone is now a passport to honor and fame. In raising ourselves to the intellectual level of the rulers we shall be simultaneously raising ourselves to their political level. Political equality will come when intellectual equality has come.

But apart from the general political efforts which we anticipate from the diffusion of Western culture in India as a matter of mere bread-and-butter, its necessity is plain and imperative. Before everything else we must live. Life before liberty—for circumstanced as we are it would be of no little advantage to the country if we occasionally showed a little more eagerness in possessing ourselves of the flesh-pots of worldly comforts and worshipping the golden calf than in singing psalms to Representative Government. When I see the utter neglect with which the awful problem of subsistence is treated in this country and the little or no regard that is paid to industries and the production of wealth and the necessaries of life, I am almost persuaded to think that it would be an advantage to the country if Indians were to forget for sometime their higher ideals and betook themselves to meaner and lovelier occupations—raking in the straw and dust like the old man in *Pilgrim's Progress*, unmindful of the angel who offers him a crown of gold and precious stones. For what is the predicament in which we stand?

In the learned professions, the competition is keen as keen can be. There is a rush of candidates for every office. "Every gate is thronged with suitors; all the markets over-

flow." For the higher branches of the public service we must go to England. For Medicine, Law, Engineering, Agriculture we must go to England. And our young men must compete there with the flower of English youth. Is this not enough to open our eyes ? Have Indians ever had to carry on the struggle for existence against such tremendous odds ? Failure in this competition means extinction. And yet the public service and the learned professions are after all of small significance in adding to the material resources of the country. Now national prosperity depends upon the development of trade and industries. But we have no trade and hardly any industries worth the name. Our old indigenous industries have decayed and are decaying ; they were bound to decay, for how can primitive implements and contrivances stand before modern inventions ? Muscles and sinews are no match for the iron hands of steam giants. In past times over-population redressed its balance by letting out floods of barbarian invasions. In these days it seeks an outlet in colonisation, in stealing into foreign countries in the guise of trade protected by what is called 'sphere of influence' and filling its stomach at the expense of weaker races by means of the policy of 'the open door.' In European countries the competition in trade has grown very keen and the pressure of over-population is beginning to be felt. Consequently the process of colonisation is going on with inward and increasing rapidity, while the mental energies of the nations are becoming more and more absorbed in the improvement of technical and industrial training and in the invention of mechanical tools and appliances. With such a Europe looking with hungry eyes upon the possession of other people, ready to venture forth in search of 'fresh fields and pastimes new' to feed its surplus population, India stands face to face. How to meet this Europe, how to keep its food from being eaten up by foreigners, how to protect its

industries from the snares and allurements of Free Trade; how to feed its own surplus population for whom outside India the British Empire has nothing but degradation and servitude—this is the great problem—the awful sphinx riddle—with which India is confronted and which not to answer is to be destroyed. Anyhow if the severity of the industrial struggle is manifest, it goes without saying that in order to engage in it with any chance of success we must fight with the improved weapons of our adversaries. Technical and mechanical training is therefore the one thing needful.

All this is a plea for higher education and mechanical training, it may be urged. Yes; but it is much more; it is a plea for 'foreign travel' also; for if higher education and mechanical training are good things, the necessity for obtaining the best kinds of them available becomes at once obvious. That there are, compared with India, far more facilities in England and other European countries for receiving the best training, scientific, literary, and technical, which the age can give, is a proposition, the truth of which, I presume, will not be seriously disputed. But I wish to explain and amplify it a little in this place, in order to bring home more vividly to the public mind, the manner in which education received in England—I confine my remarks to England as the one European country with which we are chiefly concerned—besides being of the best quality as a purely mental commodity, produces certain other effects upon the student which are of the greatest moment to him and the absence of which in our educational institutions is responsible in no small measure for the just and unjust charges that are often made against English education.

I take scientific teaching and technical and industrial instruction first. Now in India there is hardly any well-organized system of training in mechanical and industrial

arts. Mr. Tata's scheme may—I am sure it will—in course of time be of great service to us in the matter; but at present the industrial training of Indian youths is only 'a far-off adorable dream' of the future. In England this difficulty does not exist. The workshops and other institutions for theoretical and practical instruction in mechanical arts are there; and although they do not quite freely admit Indians, still with the assistance of their English friends they can obtain admission. This is one reason why England is one of the best places for the industrial training of Indians; but there is another reason even stronger than this. To live for a time in an atmosphere of industrialism, to see it in full operation, to mark the stamp of business on the sea of faces as it surges through the streets of London, Manchester and Birmingham from dawn till dusk, to witness the marvels of mechanical inventions and the clash and din of competing, conflicting forces in large centres of industry—this in itself is to my mind a matter of great advantage to an Indian. He knows his society; he must know what the European society is like. He must feel its fascination, he must catch its contagion, he must enter into the spirit and understand the tempers of money-making people; and by contrast learn to realise more vividly than he can otherwise, how dull his own society is, how inactive and dormant, stirred by no ambition, moved by no strong desires, unaffected by the greed of gold, but equally destitute of the good things which gold can buy. No receptive mind can fail to catch the tone of English society by being thrown into it for some time; and the tone of English society is pre-eminently industrial.

These remarks are applicable not to students only; they have a wider application: they apply to Indians actually carrying on trade with foreign countries. These stand in greater need of, and are likely to profit more by, keeping themselves in constant touch with European life by

studying its commercial secrets, by acquiring something of its feverish restlessness, its pushing and practical temperament. The Parsis who took the lead in this matter are now at the head of our trading classes. Even the Mahomedans of the Deccan, though less educated and naturally less practical than the Parsis, have improved their position considerably by establishing commercial relations with Africa and Arabia in the West and China and the Malay Peninsula in the East. The Hindus are behind both the Parsis and the Mahomedans, although they too are beginning to realise the exigencies of modern life and the important part which trade plays in it. These traders by doing business with foreign countries bring to India not only silver and gold, not only articles of material comfort and luxury; they bring something more—they bring fresh experiences of countries new and strange, a spirit of adventure and enterprise, wider sympathies and a more accurate knowledge of the life of varied mankind. India needs them, for while these are among the fruits of trade and travel, they in their turn react upon and stimulate the movement of trade and travel by weakening those prejudices and levelling down those barriers which have hitherto kept India isolated from other countries, and by strengthening those tendencies and creating those desires and ambitions which are calculated to draw it in course of time into the current of general commercial activity.

Important as is this aspect of the question under consideration, I am however for the present more concerned with the mental, moral and political effects of the movement of 'foreign travel,' and therefore shall for a while try to ascertain in what relation it stands to what is called the higher or liberal education of Indian youths.

A little farther back we started with two propositions—*first*, that India needs liberal education of the modern type, and *second*, that this education can best be obtained in

England. The first proposition is not disputed, but the second sometimes is. The objection comes somewhat in the following form: If an intelligent youth desires to cultivate his mind, there is sufficient scope for him in our Universities. He can study English literature, sciences, philosophy, arts. He has able teachers to teach him anything he wants to learn. The great books in literature, philosophy and sciences are as easily accessible to him as they are to the English youth at home. Keshab Chunder Sen, Kristo Das Pal, Rajendra Lal Mitter, K. T. Telang, Mr. Justice Ranade, Sir T. Madhava Rao were not educated in England; but where will you find their equals among England-returned men as writers, orators, scholars, statesmen and masters of the English tongue? A man of capacity will make a mark anywhere and everywhere; a dull man will remain dull whether he lives in the enervating climate of Bengal or the bracing atmosphere of England. As for moral training, so far as schools and colleges can impart it, there can hardly be any difference between a college at Cambridge and a college at Calcutta; while in England—this is a positive disadvantage—the Indian youth is freed from the moral restraints of home and society.

There is some truth in this view of the matter, but not the whole truth. It is true that the generality of England-returned students are not very superior to those who have been educated in India, either in culture or in conduct. It is equally true that Indian Universities have produced men of great mental and moral eminence. We may accept these facts and still be able to hold that education received in England must, if not now or in the immediate future, certainly in the long run, produce results on a far grander scale than any that can be expected from our Indian educational system. If England-returned youths do not in many cases come up to the expectations formed of them,

there are definite, intelligible reasons for it to which I will advert later on; here I would submit a few general considerations which would at once disclose some serious defects in our educational system, and leave little doubt as to the necessity for securing to our youths a sound liberal education at an English University.

To an Indian youth of average intelligence the change from a society intellectually dull and inert to a society brimful of ideas, seething with intellectual unrest cannot but affect in a variety of ways. He is bound to catch something of the fever and restlessness pervading the new atmosphere. He must learn to have his wits about him when everybody else whom he meets has his wits about him. He may not read many books, but he cannot help learning something of the wisdom without them and above them which is won by observation. Daily and hourly he is brought into contact with men who are his intellectual superiors. He finds that the home he lives in is not like the home he has left behind—his companions at the fire side and the dinner-table are not uninformed or half-informed men and ignorant women, but men and women of culture, of taste, of information. The new environments must tell upon his mental constitution and modify it—unconsciously and in spite of himself his ways will begin to change—quite as naturally as a man's accent changes by living among a new people—he will begin to find some relish in intellectual exercises as one begins to like English cheese and Irish stew. The friction of strange thoughts may irritate him, but will humble his pride, and when he comes back to India he will not be very tolerant of the self-complacency of his countrymen. We must assume some such result from his sojourn in England, or else there is no way of accounting for the operation of social forces upon the minds and character of men.

But we may take two concrete instances as to how

an Indian student would be affected by his new surroundings. First the moral influence of teachers. Cardinal Newman in his celebrated sermon on 'Personal Influence, the Means of Propagating the Truth' has described how men are influenced more by the example of the teacher—the type of what is deserving of their love and respect presented to their eyes in a concrete and tangible form—than by books or preachings. It is this personal influence of the teacher which our educational institutions lack, and which pervades every English College and is the most important factor in the making of English youths. And in India we cannot, I am afraid, have it for a long time. Able and efficient teachers though a rare commodity up to the present, can yet be had if we pay for them; but teachers capable of exercising any spell of personal influence upon their pupils, by sympathising with their hopes and tendencies, by winning their confidence and reading the secrets of their hearts—teachers who live for their pupils so that their pupils may learn to live for others—who weep over their sorrows and are happy in their joys—such teachers, indispensible factors in the education of a nation's youth, are and must be rare in this country. And the reason is plain. Indian teachers, even when they are trained in their profession, are after all a wheel in the educational machine which itself is part of the bigger administrative machine of the country, and those forces which in other departments of the State keep down the independence and originality of Indian public servants, tell upon the teacher also. He must carry out the rigid regulations of the department; he cannot encourage or in any way countenance in his pupils any disposition or tendency which is not to the taste of his superior officer; his eye is on 'promotion by results.' English teachers are after all part of the ruling class. It will be demanding too much from human nature to expect them

to live as a sort of organised protest against the European society which surrounds them. For they must, if they wish to exercise a teacher's influence over their pupils, regulate their lives very differently to that of the generality of their countrymen. They must identify themselves with the people. They must show forbearance, meekness, sympathy, affection in their treatment of them; they must mix freely with their peoples, let them feel by their 'little acts of kindness and of love' that whatever the Anglo-Indian civilian, or merchant or soldier may think of Indians, they at any rate have a genuine regard for their welfare, and that under their roof no race or class differences shall be allowed to mar the harmony of an open friendly social intercourse. But political feeling is so strong in this country and the exclusiveness of the English community so rigid, that the most amiable of English teachers after a time succumb to class-influences, their temperaments change, their amiableness passes off, 'the dyer's hand is subdued to what it works in,' and so the result is not that he is lost; the result is that the whole host of his pupils is lost. Now those who do not sufficiently realise the importance of educating young men in England should see how great this loss is, and yet it is just from this loss that the Indian youth is saved who is fortunate enough to be brought up in an English college under the personal influence of his teachers and professors. It was said of a teacher that he had breathed the love of knowledge and truth into a whole generation of his countrymen. This high function a good teacher does really discharge and in the English seats of learning there are many such. The Indian youth particularly needs a tonic of a good personal example of his teacher, because his home can offer him none, nor his society; nor would his life without such influence be a very desirable one in a country where so many temptations beset

a young man's course, and where amid the whirl of passions and frivolities, his soft moral constitution is liable to be shaken and shattered.

If this alone were the advantage of placing Indian youths in English colleges, the experiment would be well worth trying. But the English University life is beneficial to them in many other respects. First it places them under a strict moral discipline which is entirely wanting in this country. There the student after his college hours does not feel free to do what he pleases. He has to conform to certain rules, he has to behave himself in a certain manner; the supervision of the teacher does not cease beyond the college compound, and under the subtle moral influence of the corporate life of the University of which he forms a part, a certain sense of responsibility arises in the student of seeing that no stain is cast by any act of his upon the honor of his institution. Secondly, he is enabled to associate on terms of intimacy with the flower of English youth. This influences his mind and character in a variety of ways Some of its effects are well described by Mr. Bagehot. Referring to the advantage of the collegiate system at Oxford and Cambridge, he remarks thus:

"There is nothing for young men like being thrown into close neighbourhood with young men; it is the age of friendship; and every encouragement should be given—every opportunity enlarged for it; school friendships are childish; 'after life' rarely brings many; it is in youth alone that we can engrave deep and wise friendships on our close and stubborn texture. If there be romance in them, it is a romance which few would tear aside. All that 'pastors and masters' can teach young people is as nothing when compared with what young people can't help teaching one another. Man made the school, God made the playground. Horses and marbles, the knot of boys beside the schoolboy fire, the hard blows given,

and the harder ones received—these educate mankind. So too in youth, the real plastic energy is not in tutors or lectures or in books 'got up,' but in Wordsworth and Shelley; in the books that all read because all like—in what all talk of because all are interested in—in the argumentative walk or disputatious lounge—in the impact of young thought upon young thought, of fresh thought on fresh thought—of hot thought on hot thought—in mirth and refutation—in ridicule and laughter—for these are the free play of the natural mind, and these cannot be got without a college." For an Indian youth this is a great advantage—this 'impact of hot thought on hot thought'—as this is an element wholly wanting both in our colleges and our society.

But this is not all. The being brought together in close and intimate association of Indian and English youths, for a certain length of time, is a fact of very great significance. Both come to understand each other, like each other, overlook each other's faults, recognise each other's merits. The Indian youth, as yet his mind unembittered by any experience of Anglo-Indian roughness and harshness, sees nothing but gentleness, politeness, and generous manliness in the English youth. The English youth, as yet without any pride of domination, and knowing only that a gentleman is a gentleman whether white or black, finds many good points in his Indian fellow-student—a tender and sympathetic nature, a calm and sober temperament, a living and grateful heart. Prejudices of race and color are rubbed off on the cricket field and in the lecture-room, and frendships are formed which are not only a source of joy and comfort to the parties concerned, but which tend indirectly and imperceptibly, to forge new bonds of sympathy and good will between India and England. Those Englishmen with whom we have associated as fellow-students, with whom we have rowed on the *Cam* and

the *Isis*, with whom we have passed some golden hours of youthful mirth and enjoyment—those Englishmen where-ever they may go, whatever station in life they may be placed in, can never fail to cherish kindly feelings towards us and ours, and remove many a misunderstanding from the minds of their own countrymen. And for us too is needed an open and free social intercourse with Englishmen in order to make us forget racial degradation and political inferiority, lose that unmanly nervousness which the best of us feel in the presence of Englishmen, and those feelings of suspicion and estrangement with which we regard them. My belief is that few Indians who have not seen the English University life are able to understand and appreciate English character as it really is, and to maintain their self-respect without going to the extreme of self-assertiveness, in the presence of an Englishman. Personal contact removes the superstitious awe of centuries and introduces into our relations with the ruling race an element of fraternal sentiment which is bound to soften and sweeten the course of our political life.

Now, who can deny that these are great benefits worth great sacrifices? Education of a superior order, special training for the learned professions and the public service, a arge experience of modern life with all its multifarious activities, the formation of character under the varied influences of English social life, numerous opportunities and facilities for understanding Englishmen and cultivating friendship with them, the renovation and re-invigoration of our minds and characters by breathing an air thick with ideas and by living among an active, energetic, restless race of men—these are the benefits which Indian youths are expected to derive from their sojourn in England—benefits which are real and enduring in their effects upon the course of our future progress. The question is, do they derive them? Even those who are in favour of foreign travel and of

sending young men to England hesitate to give an unqualified answer.

They say 'yes, going to England for education and improvement is a good thing; but our young men don't do anything there; they spend lots of money, become anglicised in their manners and habits, come back as very indifferent lawyers, begin to despise their countrymen and do nothing for their society. So far the experiment has been a failure. Let every parent think thrice before he sends out his son to England.'

There is, I am willing to admit, some justification for this punitive judgment; still it may be reasonably urged that the experiment has not had a fair trial, and even then it has not failed. The dissatisfaction with the actual result is due to our own over-sanguine expectations. Consider for a moment the circumstances under which Indian youths ordinarily go to England. In most cases they are the sons of uneducated or half-educated parents. They go to England equipped with a very indifferent education; their parents cannot regulate their training nor determine for them the choice of their profession. So these young men are expected to do the impossible. Without sufficient University education they are expected to undertake successfully the task of self-education. Without experience and guidance they are expected to choose a profession. And further they are expected to perform these remarkable feats, with plenty of money in their pockets, with numerous temptations surrounding them from all sides, free to form any friendships and choose any companions, removed from the moral influences of their own home and society, and thrown suddenly upon the wide, wide sea of modern life without any rudder or compass to steer their course. And what is the result? The result is that their frail barks are wrecked, the waves wash them down; the wished-for haven is never reached. The

showy and exciting side of European life proves more attractive; the young man, sure of large remittances from home, does not care to go to Oxford or Cambridge, for he has no thirst for knowledge and there is none to create that in him; he stays in London, joins one of the Inns of Court, goes to some 'Coach' who by convenient short cuts leads him to the great success at the examination, and thus when at the cost of a few weeks' mechanical labour he becomes a full-fledged barrister, thinks that he has gained the be-all and the end-all of his existence, and returns to India as the joy and pride of his people. What is there for him to do otherwise? Fancy an English boy of fifteen or sixteen sent to Paris receiving large allowances from his parents, left free to do what he likes with his money and himself, without any friends to assist and advise in regard to his education. What would be his fate? His young instincts and impulses will get the better of him, the glitter of a gay society will soon begin to create in him unwholesome cravings and the weaknesses of human nature will make him what, uncorrected by salutary influences, they are always apt to make of ordinary men. Why should we in the first instance fondly imagine that sea-voyage and foreign travel in the case of the Indian youth are good irrespective of any conditions, that by the mere act of crossing the sea he

> 'Suffers a sea-change
> Into something rich and strange,'

and when in the end he fails to fulfil our expectations, then turn to blaming him and the civilization which is supposed to have corrupted him? This is not reasonable. He is a creature of the circumstances in which his parents deliberately placed him; and they need not feel much disappointed if they find that thorns and thistles have not yielded them figs and grapes.

Still I cannot help remarking here that the experiment

in spite of so many disadvantages and drawbacks has not wholly failed. Wise and educated parents have been able to turn the experiment to good account. They have watched their sons' education here and secured efficient supervision of it in England. They have taken care that their sons received good education, lived in good society, made good friendships, and chose such professions as were suited to their tastes and bent of mind. These young men have come out as Civilians, Doctors, Engineers, Agriculturists, Scientific Specialists. In their various walks of life they have earned distinction and fame, and given us men like Syed Mahomed, Romesh Chunder Dutt, Surendra Nath Banerjee, W. C. Bonnerjee, the late Dr. Bahadurji, and the brilliant wrangler Pranjpye. Even in the ranks of such young men as have not the advantage of wise parental advice and guidance in the matter of their education, and are thrown upon their own resources, there appear from time to time men who rise victorious over the temptations of their situations, in whom the inborn faculty for acquiring knowledge seeks its own satisfactions without any external or adventitious aids, who by dint of natural gifts assimilate the best part of European culture, and in whose life a few years' sojourn in England proves an epoch-making event. It speaks volumes for the vitality of modern culture and of the desire which the Indian mind has come to cherish for it, that in spite of the perils and pitfalls of European life, in spite of all the circumstances which are adverse to the acquisition of knowledge and the formation of character, in spite of money in young hands, wine in young heads, and the first flutter of new passions in young hearts, the experiment has not altogether failed—that scores of Indian youths go every year to England, and some of them do well. It is a great thing that not only many are called, but a few are actually chosen. As things now stand much money is doubtless wasted; fond parents

thoughtlessly send their sons to England without any clear notions as to what they should do there, many young men turn out utterly worthless and break their parents' hearts. But to a certain extent this is inevitable. This is the process of Nature as she works upwards to higher stages of perfection ; "of fifty seeds she often brings but one to bear." How many noble lives are wrecked, how many hopes are blasted, how much misery is caused, what an enormous quantity of human energies and efforts is wasted, before humanity as by some happy accident brings forth some great character—who makes amends for the wasteful process of nature, who stamps the image of his formality upon his age and moulds the creed of millions. The movement of sending young men to England is to my mind a good worth having, even at the heavy price we have to pay for it in the utter wreck of scores of our youths, if even once in a decade it sifts one individual of exceptional ability and moral worth from the whole mass, for this one individual strikes fire in a million hearts and clears away many prejudices which clog the progress of his race. I feel pained but not discouraged by the sorrows and misfortunes of the present, for I believe that even our blind and wasteful efforts are preparing the way for a happier future.

Still the question whether the painful and wasteful process by which we now endeavour to assimilate western culture will be long or short, is one of no small moment to any one who is interested in the education of Indian youth and their future well-being. We cannot, as rational men, wait upon the chapter of accidents and cast the burden of our responsibility upon the shoulders of Providence. In sending our sons to England, there are certain matters which demand our earnest consideration. In the first place every Indian parent must see if he has got sufficient means to educate his son properly in England. If he has not,

then I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that he should never think of the matter, whatever may be the case with English boys : a foreigner must be prepared to spend a good deal if he wants to profit by his sojourn in England. In the second place the time of the boys' education should be determined here, if the father himself is competent to do it ; if not, he must have it determined by some competent men in England. At all events the boy should be left little freedom to choose his own education, for in nine cases out of ten he will make a wrong choice. In this country we have a very good illustration of it in the fact that when left to themselves—and in most cases they are left to themselves—our young men prefer literary to scientific course for their degree examinations When this is the case with comparatively advanced students, what can we expect from England-going boys who hardly matriculate before leaving the country ? Thirdly, it is a question of very great importance as to at what age the Indian student should be sent to England. He may be sent either when he is very young, or when he is passing out his boyhood and is in the middle of his education, or when he is a grown-up young man and has completed his college career. Each stage has its advantages and its drawbacks. The most impressionable age is certainly childhood. Whoever is educated in England from that age will undoubtedly come back to India with English sentiments and habits but decidedly denationalised and anglicised. Perhaps to some this may seem desirable, it does not so to me. My idea is that one who has never known his father and mother, who has never learnt to love his brothers and sisters, whose earliest associations are connected with foreign scenes and incidents, who sees the civilization of his own country after his whole mental and moral nature has been transformed by the civilization of another—such a one whatever may be his merits in certain respects, will not

care much for his people and country, will not understand their simple, superstitious idyllic life, will be disqualified by his formed mind and stiffened creed, for the great work which requires to be done during the present transitional epoch—the work in the conflict of old and new forces, of fusion, preparation, adaptation, tentative endeavour. If a boy of fifteen or sixteen goes to England, the great advantage is that he has sufficient time before him to prosecute his studies, his mind is plastic enough to receive new and fresh impressions and yet at the same time capable of retaining the traces of home-influences, there is not much danger of his becoming denationalised. But this is just the age when the dawning youth leads the mind into many wild ways; when character begins to be formed, when it makes all the difference in the world whether the young man keeps a little to the right or a little to the left in order to arrive at the right goal. If the student goes to England after completing his college career here, he certainly goes well-equipped with enough culture to be able to take full advantage of English life and training, to choose his own line of education, to enrich his experience by an intelligent observation of European society. But on the other hand we must remember that mind like ourselves stiffens with age, a young man of over twenty does not possess the same plastic and flexible intellect as a lad of sixteen; he goes to England with the hold of early association strong upon him, with formed habits and rooted convictions; he may learn much, but he can really unlearn little; and although his mind is stored with a fund of new ideas, yet I doubt if he is able to add a cubit to his moral stature. It is not to be understood that his character does not in some material respects change for the better under the influence of his new surroundings; it does change and improve, but in its broad lineaments it remains what his home and society have made it; he gives intellectual assent to many princi-

ples to which his moral nature has not quite adapted itself.

Now while briefly pointing out some of the chief advantages and drawbacks of the ages at which the youth may be, and as a matter of fact, are, sent to England, it is not necessary for me to say which I consider to be the best age, for this must be decided with reference to the particular circumstances of each student—his antecedents, his surroundings, his education, his natural endowments, and the walk of life for which his parents and instructors think him most fitted. Suffice it to say that each age requires special provisions and safeguards, and the younger the age of the student the greater the need for them. As of course the majority of England-visiting students are, and will always be young men between sixteen and twenty years of age with incomplete college training, some of the considerations pointed out above seem to me important, to which one or two more may fitly be added in this place.

It is of the utmost importance that these young men should be placed with English families and their education looked after by English friends. As far as possible they should not be exposed to the risk and inconveniences of lodging-houses and boarding-houses. It is not easy to find good families who would take Indian boarders, but the personal influence of English friends will go far to obviate this difficulty.

The most difficult thing is the supervision of young Indians' education. Some thirteen or fourteen years ago a Committee was formed in London under the auspices of the National Indian Association for the purpose of looking after Indian students and giving them help and advice in matters of education. The Committee I believe still exists. One of the cardinal principles of this Committee has been that it must have the young men's money in its own hands and

regulate and check their expenses, for here or elsewhere the master of the purse is the master of everything. If the student has control of his money, no supervision can avail. He will spend money as he likes and will seldom like what he should. Even during the early days of its existence when I was a member of that Committee, I could find it capable of doing much good, and one of the tests of its good work was that the very first batch of young men who were placed under its charge and were in every way doing well under its supervision, rid themselves of its restraining influences as soon as they could persuade their parents to make them the sole disposers of their money. Indian parents have not sufficiently availed themselves of the help offered by this Committee, but I have no doubt that the utility of the Committee or similar organisations will be felt more and more as the career of England-returned young men produces a larger and larger harvest of disappointments.

Another very important thing is the choice of a profession. We often hear pathetic wails over the legal profession being over-stalked; so it is; but beyond weeping and wailing what do we do? Nothing; on the contrary we send our sons to England and feel very happy when they join the Inns of Court. They manage to pass the necessary examinations and return to India as "gentlemen of the long robe," but with very short arms to wrestle with the difficulties of their profession. Now, I do not say that young men should not study Law in England—some of them are eminently fitted for that branch of knowledge; but they must turn their attention to other professions also. There is great room for good doctors, engineers and other scientific specialists in this country; and surely these are more needed for the production and augmentation of our national wealth than any number of lawyers put together. But we must not expect a boy of sixteen or seventeen to be able to resist the temptation of

swimming with the current and of doing what he sees his other fellow students do.

While these are some of the principal things which parents and guardians would do well to take into their consideration, there are some others, equally important but equally neglected by those whom they concern, upon which it may not be inopportune to address a few words to the young men themselves. They have to bear in mind that the question of foreign travel besides its educational aspect has other aspects as well—and in regard to these they bear certain peculiar responsibilities because their sojourn in England, their education and their new experiences give them a peculiar position in their society. In the concluding pages of this essay I can but very briefly touch upon this side of the question.

I have spoken of foreign travel. More particularly in one of its concrete and most important aspects in connection with the education of Indian youths—as part of the great movement of illumination the rise and spread of which under the flag of new forces is perhaps the most remarkable phenomenon of modern times; and therefore I cannot but think of those who visit Europe either for business or for education, as having a high duty laid upon them of preparing themselves for the great task of social regeneration which awaits them, on their return, in this country. The question of social reform has many sides and involves many intricate issues; but one thing with regard to it appears clear beyond the reach of doubt that for a speedy and successful solution of it, the sympathy and moral support of Englishmen are nearly as needful as the patriotic co-operation and energetic exertions of the Indians themselves. Now it is clear that if the generality of Englishmen are mere indifferent spectators of our social changes and do not care to cultivate a free and friendly intercourse with us, it is because both of us are separated by certain race prejudices, born of

our ignorance of each other's habits and dispositions. In India the exigencies of politics will probably keep these prejudices alive for many a day. But in England it is possible to remove them to a considerable extent if we succeed in making Englishmen see that Indians are not the semi-savages they are so often represented to be, that they have a great civilization of their own, that in intelligence and morals they are not unworthy specimens of humanity. And we must remember that Englishmen will judge the whole race by such of its specimens as may happen to come before them. At present they see Indian merchants, politicians and students. From their character and accomplishments, their tastes and pursuits, they judge the state of our civilization. They are quite justified in supposing that the Indians whom they see in England are mostly of a superior class ; and if their superior class do not seem to them to come up to the mark and betray any serious defects and shortcomings, they cannot be expected to think much of the common sense of our countrymen. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the Indians who go to England should, by their intelligence and character, be fitted to make a favourable impression upon the minds of the English people. The credit of a whole nation is in their hands ; they may lower it or raise it in the eyes of the civilized world. The vastness of the consequences flowing from their conduct is the measure of their responsibility. Let no Indian think that if in London or Paris, where nobody seems to care who he is, where he feels himself 'lonely in a crowd,' he misbehaves himself, nothing matters. His landlady and maid servant, the waiter that serves him his dinner at the Club, the barber that shaves him—these watch him, scrutinise him in his careless unguarded moments, and according to the impression they come to form of him, they think of his country and people. If three Englishmen come constantly in contact with good and well-

behaved Indians, of refined tastes and gentlemanly habits, they cannot but begin to respect the nation to which they belong—and once they come to look upon us as their worthy associates in the work of life, we may be sure of their sympathy and co-operation in the great work of reform which lies before us. Think of the change in European sentiments towards India wrought by men like Professor Max Muller and others by bringing to light certain race affinities between the East and the West; how much greater would be the benefit to India, and why not to England also if the Englishman finds that his Indian fellow subject, besides being related to him by ties of race and language, is possessed of certain mental and moral excellences which are the host of modern civilization! This view of the matter seems to me important, for the sympathy and good-will of rulers have always been decisive factors in the progress of natives.

While it is important that the Indian who goes to England should make a favourable impression upon the people there, it is equally important that on his return home he should be found deserving of the respect and confidence of his own people, for they will judge European civilization, the advantages of European experience and knowledge from their effect upon his mind and character. His example may be encouraging or disappointing; in either case its bearing upon the people's attitude towards English culture and English civilization is obvious. Every human thing is judged by its fruits. The people at large are very suspicious of new ideas and institutions, have little confidence in new growths, have accepted many new things under the pressure of necessity, and this feeling of distrust of modern aims and ideals of life will continue so long as their goodness and soundness is not proved to them by plain and palpable results. The Indian who returns home anglicised—with English vices and without English vir-

tues—who treats his national institutions with a superior air of contempt, rides roughshod over his people's prejudices, and delights in wounding their tenderest susceptibilities—his example goes far towards strengthening and intensifying those feelings of suspicion and even positive dislike which the Indian people generally cherish towards modern civilization. It is a common complaint against many England-returned Indians that they have become denationalised and have lost touch with their society. The complaint is on the whole just; and I have no doubt that the reaction which has of late set in in this country against the indiscriminate adoption of European ideas, fashions and manners which characterised young Indians till fifteen or twenty years ago, is partly due to the discouraging example set by anglicised Indians, and partly to that general advancement of knowledge by which the people are beginning to appreciate better than before the worth of their religion and the beauties of their ancient literature. So then, if this reaction against modern civilization, which seems to me in some of its aspects even now premature and injurious, is not to arrest the march of the Indian mind by delaying indefinitely the re-adjustment of the old order to the exigencies of the new time, it is necessary that England-returned men should be typical of all that is good in modern life and culture, so that by the actual worthiness of their lives they may be capable of disarming hostile criticism and correcting popular prejudices, of enabling the people to feel some attraction for European ways of thinking and living and inducing them to exchange old lamps for new. This high mission Providence has laid upon their shoulders. Every young Indian who goes to England is charged not only with the duties of a student but also with those of a reformer. He is an apostle of modern civilization—a bringer of the new lights to his countrymen. If his light too turn out to be mere darkness, then how

great will be the darkness. He should recognise from the very beginning this part of his duty as of very solemn import, the preparation for the proper performance of which is not to be put off for a single day.

I do not agree with those who think that a young man should think of nothing except his studies so long as he is a student, that the proper time for cherishing dreams of reform is when he enters the world. Youth, to my mind, is the time for everything which ought to be the object of a good citizen's life. It is the time when the mind is plastic to the touch of circumstances, when confidence in one's self—the great secret of success in every walk of life—is abundant, when sympathies and affections are ardent, and the fount of energy full and fresh ; and if this time is not utilised by filling young and passionate hearts with the fervour of social amelioration, we may rest assured that no efforts and experience of after years will avail much.

Manhood brings its own duties, its own cares and anxieties, and then who thinks of social good ? Other impulses are developed, other ambitions arise. Men easily succumb to them. The world is so strong that sometimes even those who in their younger days felt social fervour as soon as they find themselves in the rough and tumble of life and experience,

> "The losses, the crosses
> That active man engage,"

cool down half in despair, half in disgust at a world out of joint, which will not allow itself to be set right as promptly as they would wish. Hence we find men who are good friends, good fathers, good husbands, respectable citizens and honest public servants, and yet who seem to possess no public spirit, to care nothing for others, whom the sufferings of their fellows beyond the limited circle of their friends and relations do not move, and in whom the sense of social duty is very imperfectly developed. These are the men

who in their younger days never learnt to regard social good as the supreme object of their life. Nobody will ever be capable of caring for his society with much ardour in his riper years who does not learn to care for it when young. In the spring-tide of life, when our faculties are active and alert and the blood runs swiftly in our veins, when the light of love and hope gilds our horizon, and the song of birds is sweet in our ears, and the sight of flowers gladdens our hearts—then, then is the time for dreaming dreams and seeing visions of social and political Utopias, for it is these dreams and visions which make the love of humanity the breath of our nostrils, the heart-blood of our hearts, and even in the midst of the world's cruelest disappointments enable us to pursue with undiminished zeal our up-hill struggles towards the light and the right, sustained by the 'mighty hopes that make us men.' It is because I have this strong faith in the impulses and enthusiasms of youth that I so much desire that these impulses and enthusiasms of the young men who go to England should be made use of and the supreme importance of their right use in the cause of social good should be impressed upon their minds.

And it is even of immediate and practical importance that young men should have the sense of social responsibility fully awakened in them, for the very first problem which on their return home, they—or at least such of them as are of Hindu persuasion—have to solve is how to get themselves reinstated in their respective communities. For him who is prepared to abjure caste publicly the solution is easy; he gives up his small sect and becomes a citizen of the world. But it is extremely doubtful if in any other respect he improves his position. If he has sons and daughters, if he is a man of sociable nature, he is sure to feel certain practical difficulties which everyone must feel who has given up his society and is not able to enter any other. But we need not trouble ourselves about him, because for

long time to come, he may be certain his example will not be popular in this country. Then there is the case of those who want to get back into their society, which they know to be caste-bound, but which they want to enter on condition they are allowed to go about as so many chartered libertines submitting to no caste rules and doing whatever they like in open defiance of them. And this brings in the question of *Prashchit*, or penance, upon which I intended to say something, but as I have already exceeded my limits, I shall confine myself to a few general remarks upon the remarkable attitude of these men towards their society.

Hindu society, it would be generally admitted, is not as yet prepared to give up caste; if an England-returned man is, he must be prepared to give up Hindu society. It is no use saying that society tolerates breaches of caste, that there are hundreds and thousands who eat and drink with everybody and society takes no notice of them; that when one does what society already knows and connives at, why shouldn't he be allowed to do it openly? Why, for the simple reason that society is not prepared to tolerate open defiance of caste rules. If any one think it is, he has only to ask it to allow him to remain in it on condition of his observing no caste rules, and he will soon find himself out of it. The changes of a hundred years have brought about a state of things in which the Hindu community has by way of compromise come to put up with breaches of caste observances to a certain extent—but only to a certain extent—beyond which it does not at present seem disposed to extend its tolerance. To an England-returned man it simply says this:—"You may or may not believe in caste; I am only concerned with your public conduct—your conduct on social occasions; if it is consistent with caste ordinances, I don't care what you do in the privacy of your home; and if not you must go." Now, I ask my radical friend, what more latitude do you want for yourself? Where is your

principle compromised if you enter your community on those terms? There is no hypocrisy, no deception, no double-dealing when your conduct is neither intended nor calculated to deceive any body; for who is so simple-minded as to believe that you feel any romantic attachment for caste? But at the same time be sure that so long as Hindu society does not undergo considerable changes which will be the work of centuries, so long as millions of Hindus are ignorant, or are bred up in the old school; so long as Hindu women do not come under the influence of the new light—and there are hardly more than a score of such women outside Calcutta and Bombay—caste system, an institution of immemorial antiquity, which has made its impression upon every nerve and fibre of our social organism, will continue to exist and nothing but quiet and gentle compromises extending over a long space of time, will be found efficacious enough to dissolve its bonds. The way to break the strength of Hindu orthodoxy is not, if I may use a phrase which the Boer war has brought into fashion, by making frontal attacks upon its impregnable positions be[illegible]d caste-entrenchments, but by turning its flanks, by going round and marking those weak points in its organization which cannot be well-defended against the pressure of new forces.

What, are we to wait, it may be urged, till the bulk of the Hindu community is prepared to renounce caste? Are we to reform only such abuses as everybody is prepared to give up? Are we to follow Pope's prudent advice,

> "Be not the first by whom the new are tried'
> Nor yet the last to lay the old aside?"

By no means; but consider that before you attempt to bring about any change you must prepare the public mind for it. You must change men's opinion first before you can hope to change their conduct. And what is the Hindu public opinion in regard to caste? Is it really in

favour of abolishing caste? Is it even ripe enough to allow a free discussion of the question at a mixed gathering? Have we forgotten plague-riots and the *Sanatan Dharam* demonstrations? Well, the fact is that anti-caste opinions are not tolerated by the Hindu community; much less can we expect it to tolerate their realization in practice. Educate public opinion upon this question; you will find even this apparently simple process somewhat long and laborious. Reforms attempted in haste are often repented at leisure. An open crusade against caste can end only in disaster; for I consider it nothing short of disaster that the Hindu community should by the action of an aggressive and [illegible] less radicalism be driven into the arms of the reactio[illegible] movements which have of late created so much stir [illegible] unrest in the country. Periods of transition have their inconveniences and inconsistencies; but they have to be borne, compromises have to be effected; the old does not die without a struggle, the new is not born without travails. Our rapid reformers would do well to pardon the words of Mr. Herbert Spencer:

"For it cannot be too emphatically asserted that this policy of compromise, alike in institutions, in actions and in beliefs, is a policy essential to a society going through the transitions caused by continued growth and development. The illogicalities and the authorities to be found so abundantly in current opinions and existing arrangements, are those which inevitably arise in the course of perpetual re-adjustments to circumstances perpetually changing. Ideas and institutions proper to a past social state but incongruous with the new social state that has grown out of it, surviving into this new social state they have made possible, and disappearing only as this new social state establishes its own ideas and institutions, are necessarily, during their [illegible]urvival, in conflict with these new ideas and institutions—[illegible]ecessarily furnish elements of contradic-

tion in men's thoughts and deeds. And yet as, for the carrying on of social life, the old must continue so long as the new is ready, this perpetual compromise is an indispensable accompaniment of a normal development. Just as injurious as it would be to an amphibian to cut off its *bronchaiæ* before its lungs were well-developed, so injurious must it be to a society to destroy its old institutions before the new have become organised enough to take their places." (Study of Sociology, pp. 396-397).

Some would construe this into a plea for maintaining the *statu quo.* They think that because they and their friends are prepared for certain reforms, therefore the whole country is prepared for them. Some of them even go the length of saying that if the Hindu population is not going to submit to them, they will form a separate society of their own. Carlyle says somewhere 'Two or three gentlemen have met in a room and have said. Go to, we will make a religion.' So these gentlemen want to make a society of the elect—without caste, without Hindu principles, without old traditions. In their eyes moderation is the virtue of cowards, and compromise the deceiver of traitors. They will however soon find out their mistake. Our social conservatism is too strong to be pulled down in a day. It is being gradually undermined by the tide of modern civilization, 'a tide that moving seems asleep, too full for sound or foam,' and it is no part of wisdom to check or retard its progress by exciting and grading into fury the passions and prejudices of a thousand years. Even for bringing about slow changes in our customs and beliefs the zeal and courage of heroes and martyrs will be needed and most effective in breaking the neck of Hindu orthodoxy will be those who will remain in their society and not those who go out of it.

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IX.—Social Intercourse between Europeans and Indians.

By S. Satthianadhan, Esq., M.A., L.L. M.,
Professor of Philosophy, Presidency College, Madras.

The question of the feasibility of the promotion of a more intimate social relation between Europeans and Indians cannot be discussed satisfactorily unless one has a knowledge of the vast difference in the habits, thoughts and avocations of the two races. That there is a wide gulf between the two races which even a century of British rule has not succeeded in bridging there is no need to prov[e]. But unfortunately those who have either written or spoke[n] on this delicate subject have done more harm than good by their *ex parte* statements. A few years back an article appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, from the pen of Mr. Wilfred Blunt, professing to trace the history of the "ever-widening gulf of personal dislike," which separates the educated Indian from the "individual Englishmen who rule them"; and I know for certain that if that article had any effect at all, it was to make the gulf wider than it was before Mr. Wilfred Blunt took upon himself the self-imposed task of bridging it. I shall quote a single passage from the article referred to: "I shall no doubt incur anger by saying it, but it is a fact that the English woman in India, during the last thirty years, has been the cause of half the bitter feelings there between race and race. It was her presence at Cawnpore that pointed the sword of revenge after the Mutiny, and it is her constantly increasing influence now that widens the gulf of ill-feeling and makes amalgamation daily more and more impossible. I have over and over again noticed this. The English Collector, the English Doctor, or the English Judge may have the best will in the world to meet their Indian neighbours and offi-

cial subordinates on equal terms. Their wives will hear nothing of the sort, and the result is a meaningless interchange of cold civilities." Such statements as these do more harm than good and have been indulged in frequently. I do not pretend to throw any new light on the subject, but my position as an Indian, and as one who has had the privilege of a long stay in England, enables me to view the problem from a point of view different from that in which it is generally viewed by those of my countrymen who have not had the privilege of an intimate acquaintance with English life.

In the first place let me say that a complete fusion of two races, under present conditions, is an utter impossibility; and when I speak of free social intercourse, I do not mean a state of things that would lead to such a complete fusion. The intermarriage of the races is a subject which, perhaps, does not come within the scope of this article, but I may be permitted to say that, despite the few instances that have taken place, the time even for the discussion of such a theme has not yet arrived. That such marriages have taken place, and some of them may have turned out happily, may possibly be true; but the very idea of such a thing has, we may say happily, not yet become familiar to the European mind, and it must be long before the many, and, as at present seems, insuperable objections to such marriages becoming common can be overcome. It is strange, but still it is a known fact that, so long as human nature remains what it is, eastern and western nations cannot amalgamate without a loss to both.

Before attempting to answer the question of the possibility of the promotion of a more intimate social relation between Europeans and Natives, it is necessary to take a glance at the present state of Indian Society, to understand clearly of what elements, homogeneous or heterogeneous, it is composed and also discover whether there is any likeli-

hood of these elements being welded into one homogeneous whole. The word "Indian," in its widest acceptation, embraces all people who live in India, including Brahmins, Sudras, Pariahs, even Mahomedans, not to speak of the various sections and sub-sections into which these are divided. Professor Seeley has pointed out in his *Expansion of England* that all the elements of a common nationality are absent in India, *viz.*, (1) community of race or rather the belief in a community of race; (2) the sense of a common interest and the habit of forming a single political whole and (3) a common religion.* Whatever may be the changes coming over the country now,—and some powerful influences are being brought to bear upon the races inhabiting India,—it must be admitted that the caste system is still in the ascendant and prevents the amalgamation of the Indian peoples so widely diverging in language, in social customs, and in religion. The educated classes, it is true, claim to be free from the trammels of caste, but the glaring incongruity between thoughts and deeds, between public profession and private practice, is felt by none more keenly than by the educated Hindu himself. Much is said against caste, but caste still reigns supreme in some form or other, even in the most enlightened circles. There is still an absence of perfect sympathy among the peoples of India. Their habits and idiosyncracies, their prejudices and customs, prevent their complete fusion, and to this day they are separated by impassable barriers. Seeing that the points of disparity between the different classes that constitute the Indian population are so great as to make their cordially mingling with one another impossible, how then can we expect the Indian population, made up as it is of these motley races, to mix cordially with Europeans, a people entirely differing from them in creed, colour, and costume? Charity, it is said, should begin at home; and so there should be free social intercourse first between

classes of people which have greater affinities with one another. The European may well say :—"You wonder at there being an icy barrier between Europeans and Natives: what free intercourse is there between peoples who constitute the Indian population?" I do not mean to insinuate for a moment that there is no sympathy and social intercourse between the Indian races; what I mean is that before we begin to find fault with Europeans for their aloofness we should show that there is more of cordiality and union between the different Indian races, who, though locally intermingled, are still morally separated. There is still distrust between class and class; there is still that narrow exclusiveness and petty-minded jealousy keeping the different castes and classes apart from one another. All efforts of our educated countrymen should, therefore, be directed towards creating a universal feeling of nationality. India consists merely of a vast assemblage of races divided into countless unsympathising castes and classes. A bond of union is needed. I do of course admit that English education and western civilization have amalgamated to some extent the varying forces among the Indian population; but greater exertions must be put forth by the various castes and classes that exist in India to bring about a deeper sympathy and a more complete union. It is very easy to point out the mote in our neighbour's eye and overlook the beam in our own. Let not one caste despise another. Let there be an end of all religious intolerance and bigotry. Let there be a freer intercourse between Mahomedan and Hindu, Hindu and Christian, Christian and Mahomedan. Let all learn to think alike and also to act alike, "yoked in one fellowship of joys and pains," realizing that we are all fellow-citizens of a common mother country; and then we shall have greater reason to complain of the icy barrier that now separates Europeans from Natives.

In trying to trace the cause of that absence of free

intercourse between the rulers and the ruled, we should not fail to take into account one essential characteristic of the English nation. The English are the most reserved of all races. It is the nature of an Englishman to keep himself aloof from a foreigner, whether European or Asiatic, one with a dark or a white skin. A channel only twenty miles broad separates France from England, and yet there is a gulf between the peoples of these two countries nearly as wide as the one that separates the English from the dusky inhabitants of India. Referring to the insular character of the English, Emerson says :—"In short every one of these islanders is an island himself, safe, tranquil, incommunicable. In a company of strangers you would think him deaf; his eyes never wander from his table and newspaper. He is never betrayed into any curiosity or unbecoming emotion. They have all been trained in one severe school of manners, and never put off the harness. He does not give his hand. He does not let you meet his eye. It is almost an affront to look a man in the face, without being introduced. In mixed or in select companies they do not introduce persons; so that a presentation is a circumstance as valid as a contract. Introductions are sacraments. He withholds his name. At the hotel he is hardly willing to whisper it to the clerk at the booking office. If he gave you his private address and card, it is with an avowal of friendship; and his bearing on being introduced is cold, even though he is seeking your acquaintance, and is studying how he shall serve you."

This account of the English character contains much of truth. In the course of a conversation I once had with a German Missionary who had lived in India for upwards of twenty years, he said :—"What strikes us Germans in India most is the utter exclusiveness of the English. They try their best to have as little to do with the Natives as possible. They even shun us, though we are so near of kin

to them. We Germans behave differently in our colonies." Well, this state of things can be accounted for only by the fact of the natural reservedness of the English character.

There is an innate sense of superiority in the Englishman which makes him look upon himself as belonging to a race the first in all the world. To his eyes even his immediate neighbours; the French and the Germans, are his inferiors, and he becomes more alive to this superiority when he leaves his island home to mix with foreigners. But at home he is himself natural and genuine. Hence, to know what the English really are, we must go to their very firesides. It is only there that we find out their real character. It is there, more than anywhere else, you feel their kin dness and consideration, their unaffectedness and liberality of feeling. It is worth going to England at any cost and inconvenience to find out what the English really are. Even now, as I look back, I cannot help bringing before my mind those happy days which I had the inestimable privilege of spending with English friends, who were none the less cordial because of my being a foreigner. These friendships I enjoy even now, though many seas lie between India and England. In that strange land many a door was open to me; and the kind treatment and the warm welcome I received in those English homes made my stay in England appear almost a pleasant dream to me. This has been the experience of others of my countrymen who have visited England. Let us not therefore judge hastily of the English in India, by looking at only the official side of their character. To a great extent they move in an artificial atmosphere in this country. Was it not Rudyard Kipling who said that the Ten Commandments cease to be binding on an Englishman on this side of Aden? Whether he meant that this statement of his should be taken seriously or not, we do not need a Kipling to tell us that the conditions of life in India of

an Englishman are entirely different from those in England.

I have referred to the innate sense of superiority of the Englishman and his natural reservedness. These features of his character have their ugly side as well. Too much of self-consciousness often degenerates into swagger; and there is no human infirmity so melancholy as British swagger. We see it manifesting itself in so many ways. To give one single example. There appeared three years ago a remarkable work by Dr. Pearson, entitled *National Life and Character.* This work, which has been highly eulogized by the British Press, tries to work out one single idea, namely, that the dark races are in reality lower than the white races *in the sense of being unfit for progress and civilization.* Now there does not need much logic to point out that such a sweeping generalization, with regard, not to the *present* condition but to the *future* of the dark races, is the outcome of imperial insolence and a narrow conception of human progress; yet the numerous British critics of Dr. Pearson's work, including the London *Times,* accepted his assumption as a matter of course and never thought of questioning the very A. B. C. of his mode of reasoning, which is the outcome of national prejudice. The British as a nation have yet to learn that there is nothing in race which, under a systematic education and training, continued over long generations, could prevent the dark races from ultimately inheriting a higher civilization.

Then let us pray that come it may—
  As come it will for a' that—
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth
  May bear the gree and a' that.
For a' that and a' that,
  It is coming yet for a' that,

That man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

I am also afraid that the conditions of life in India of an Englishman are such that they tend to foster and nourish this questionable side of his character, namely, race conceit. An Englishman arrives in India and finds to his utter astonishment that he is made more of than ever he was before; and if he is one who holds any position of official influence and draws a high salary, there will never be wanting a circle of natives who treat him almost as a demi-god. Not only are the lower classes given to cringing and fawning; but even the educated classes have the same weakness. There is a great deal of false hero-worship in India,—worship of mere pelf and power, and this trait in the native character, combined with the innate sense of superiority in the Englishman, is a serious hindrance in the way of bringing the two races together on any footing of equality.

But even admitting these—the peculiar constitution of Hindu Society and the natural reservedness of the English—as barriers to a complete social fusion, I do not see why there should not be a more cordial relationship existing between Europeans and Natives than there is at present. After all, it is not much that the natives require of their English neighbours. They only desire a more friendly intercourse, a more kindly sympathy. What then can be the obstacles to these? Let us see.

Mr. C. T. Buckland, in his *Sketches of Social Life in India*, has an interesting chapter on Native life. He says that the chief cause of the want of social intercourse between Europeans and Natives is the little knowledge which the former have of the inner social life of the natives. An Englishman sees a Native in his office, where they meet together for the purpose of going through some dry work. They exchange a "good morning" or a "good

evening," and they never see anything of each other till they meet the next day to look over some official document or talk about business matters. I know the little knowledge which the English have of the inner social life of the natives is often brought forward as an obstacle to free social intercourse. But I fear that this excuse is a very lame one altogether. It is confounding cause and effect to say that the want of mutual knowledge is an obstacle to free social intercourse. If there is freer intercourse between the two races, the Europeans will certainly have a better knowledge of the inner social life of the Natives. Even Sir Monier Williams, notwithstanding his wide Indian experience, has fallen into the very same mistake. In an address he delivered at a meeting of the National Indian Association, he says—and he repeats it over and over again—that the want of sympathy on the part of the English towards their Indian fellow subjects is simply and solely due to the insufficient knowledge which the former have of India and the people. If Sir Monier Williams, in making such a statement, referred only to the English at home, there would have been no objection taken to it, but if he wishes to make out that the English in India are uncharitable and unsympathetic because they are ignorant, I can only say that the statement is incorrect. The English in India cannot conscientiously plead the want of mutual knowledge as an excuse for their unsympathetic conduct. The ignorance (and there is plenty of it among Englishmen in India) is the effect and not the cause of the unsympathetic nature of the majority of Englishmen who sojourn in our midst. We often come across very amusing instances of ignorance relating to India and Indians among Englishmen at home; such ignorance is pardonable, I saw nothing incongruous in an Englishman at home asking me whether the Zenanas were not a tribe of Afghans. I was not in the least surprised to see once a number of placards in a large town in

England, announcing a Missionary meeting, in which it was said that the Bishop of Travancore, New Zealand, would take part. It did not in the least shock me when the daughter of a Member of Parliament once asked me, with much *naivete,* whether in India houses were built of bricks. But when I am told that there are civilians who will not be able to pass an examination in the Geography of India outside their own presidency; when I remember coming across Eglishmen in India using opprobrious terms such as "devilish" to designate the religious tenets of India; when I read sweeping statements about the character of the native population, as for example, the following: "a nation of liars, perjurers, forgers, devoid of gratitude, trust, good nature, and every other virtue," "people addicted to adulation, dissimulation, dishonesty, falsehood, and perjury;" when one sees all this, one cannot but be astonished at such ignorance and come to the conclusion that such ignorance is only the outcome of national pride. Let there be good will and sympathy between the people of England and the people of India, then there will be no more talk about mutual ignorance. Want of sympathy is not rooted in the want of knowledge, it is the want of knowledge that is rooted in the want of sympathy.

Sir Monier Williams, in his deeply interesting work on "Modern India and the Indians," says: "The impenetrable barrier with which the Hindus surround their homes, and their refusal to sit at meals with Europeans, are fatal to mutual friendliness and sociability." The same causes are also assigned by Mr. C. T. Buckland, as coming in the way of a complete social fusion between the rulers and the ruled. "Two of the main elements," writes Mr. Buckland, "of social intercourse, according to English ideas, consist (1) in dining together, (2) in the interchange of ladies' society." As regards the first, it is true dinners play an important part in lubricating business, softening asperities,

and bringing about a good understanding between people; but at the same time it must be admitted that caste prejudices cannot be regarded as in any way constituting an insurmountable difficulty to free social intercourse. Caste prejudices have not prevented a few noble Englishmen and Englishwomen from forming the most agreeable relations with Indians belonging to the highest castes. It is indeed most unreasonable to say that because a man will not eat with me I will have nothing to do with him. If the English expect their Hindu fellow-subjects to give up caste, promising, on that condition, to move more freely with them, it is but just that the Hindus should expect their European neighbours to make some concession at least in return. Sir Monier Williams goes so far as to dissuade his countrymen in India from eating beef, on the authority of St. Paul, who says, "If meat make my brother to offend I will eat no flesh while the world standeth." An English gentleman who did not regard caste prejudices as forming any chief obstacle to a free intercourse between the two races said: "A man who will neither eat with you nor drink with you, it is said, nor admit you to his own wife's society, cannot be really intimate in your house. But I confess I cannot see the force of this argument. In my own case I did not find any difficulty in forming the most agreeable relations with Brahmins, Mahomedans, Parsees, and Native Christians. I found no difference of any insurmountable kind between their ideas and my own, not more, indeed, than would be the case had they been Spaniards or Italians. The fact of their not breaking bread with me I am sure constitutes no kind of obstacle to our kindly relations." I have already admitted that caste prejudices do stand in the way of a greater social fusion between two classes; but I do not regard the breaking of bread as an indispensable condition of social intercourse. Every one will admit that the social relations between educated Hindus and educated Mahomedans are

of an intimate nature, and yet they do not dine with each other.

And then what about the exclusiveness of the Natives of India and their social and religious prejudices? it will be asked. An English lady, for instance, who wishes to know more about the inner life of the Hindus, does she not find a difficulty in being admitted into a Hindu home? It is my humble opinion that a foreigner will find very little difficulty in getting an insight into the inner life of the Hindu, if only he really seeks the acquaintance and friendship of the latter. Religious and social prejudices will never stand in the way of their becoming more intimately acquainted. A Native gentleman thinks it a great honour if only he receives a visit from his European friends. The native heart is naturally kind, but the kindness becomes warmer when the object of it is a member of the dominant class. The respect and attachment which Natives have to one of the ruling race, who does or means to do them good, is almost unbounded; any expression of real sympathy is always repaid by a hundredfold degree of respect and regard.

The degraded condition of Hindu women must, however, be admitted to be a fertile source of discontent. It is perfectly true that one of the main elements of social intercourse, according to English ideas, consists in the interchange of ladies' society. But here again, in trying to lift our women to a higher level, we naturally expect greater sympathy and support from our foreign neighbours, and more especially from English ladies resident in India. We dare not of course say that no attempts have been made by English ladies to help their Indian sisters. All honour to those few philanthropic European ladies who, both in India and in England, most disinterestedly help the cause of female progress in our country. We thank them most sincerely for their invaluable help, but, at the same time, I believe I am right in saying that the number of English

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ladies in India who really wish to be of some direct use to their benighted Hindu sisters is very insignificant. How many English ladies, other than those who belong to the small and noble band of Zenana workers, to whom India owes so much, try to learn enough of the vernaculars to speak a few words in them! Perhaps this is expecting too much from them; but there are simpler and easier ways of helping the cause of female progress. English ladies can do much by their sympathy. The very fact, for instance, of an English lady visiting a school will draw scores of young girls to it; and, if the interest taken is lasting, much permanent good will come of it. We are not justified in asking much, knowing as we do the immense gulf that separates the majority of our females from those English ladies who sojourn in our midst. We only want a little more sympathy; we only wish them to take a little more interest in things that concern the welfare of India's women. Her Majesty the Queen-Empress, by studying the Hindustani language, has shown, in an unmistakable manner, her great sympathy with her Indian subjects, and this act of hers has been a source of great encouragement to them. In our own Presidency, Lady Wenlock did a great deal to promote the cause of the women of India, and the noble example set by this exalted lady will not be without its effect on her countrywomen. The good work done by ladies, such as Mrs. Grigg, Miss Gell, Mrs. Arundel, Mrs. Benson, Mrs. Brander, and others, is also bearing fruit in various directions. At the same time, we Indians, too, have our own duties. There is not the slightest use in commending with the lips a certain reform as beneficial to society; every possible step should be taken to carry it out practically. There are hundreds of our countrymen, who fully recognize the importance of female education, and know full well the conspicuous part it plays in the civilization of the country. They are ready to give,

when an opportunity occurs, elaborate lectures on female education and propose still more elaborate plans for carrying out a scheme of education throughout India; but when it comes to teaching their own wives, daughters, or sisters, to read or write, their zeal or eloquence seems to vanish. So much then for their applying in practice what they highly applaud in theory. Let this one thing, therefore, be borne in mind: the spread of education among native ladies cannot but be fraught with good results, and will tend more to assimilate the character and mode of thought of the Hindu with that which is the outcome of Western civilization than perhaps any other that can be devised. I know that there is a belief current among a class of natives that the general education of women will lead to the loosening of social ties, the displacement of customary ways, and the disturbance of the domestic equilibrium. Some even go further, and assert that the little education that Hindu girls have received has stripped them of the graces for which they were remarkable. But those who are interested in the educational progress of the country do make allowance for such opinions; and their complaints do not refer to the section of the native community which is hampered by such fears. All that they protest against is the apathy and indifference of the intelligent and educated natives, who are fully alive to the advantages of female education, but who, in spite of their enlightenment, have done practically nothing to further a cause which, they know full well, is fraught with the deepest issues to their country. It is true India is in a period of transition, and there must be some dislocation before the lessons of emancipation are fully learnt, and stability is reached. But the educated Indian knows this, and is fully aware that, in spite of temporary embarrassment, a time will come when a more perfect womanhood will be produced, and when the daughters of India will compare favourably

in intelligence, in character, and in all the graces of life with her more favourably circumstanced sister in the West. His lack of practical interest is, therefore, all the more to be regretted.

It is often said that the moral gulf between Englishmen and Indians is so wide as to make the promotion of good will and sympathy between the two races an utter impossibility. Well, to this there can be given an easy reply. Granting that the English are morally superior to the Indians, then one of the signs of this moral superiority would necessarily be their mixing freely with their superiors with the object of raising them to a higher level. I can never believe in the moral superiority of a person who thinks that one of the conditions of his exalted position is that he should keep himself aloof from his inferiors. And then again is the moral gulf so wide after all ? If the English possess such sterling qualities as sincerity, straightforwardness, a possionate regard for truth, courage, and manliness, must it not be admitted that there is also much that is good, true, and lovely in the Indian character, as for example, patient perseverance, calm endurance under suffering, a love of simplicity, filial obedience, reverence for superiors, tenderness towards animal life, faithfulness in service, and toleration of religious diversities ? Will, then, the English, by mixing more freely with their Hindu brethren, be solely the losers ? To cultivate friendly relations all that is needed is a little blindness to each other's faults and a generous recognition of each other's virtues.

Mr. H. J. S. Cotton, in his work on "New India," makes out that the sympathies of the two nations are less kindly than they were in the days of a past generation; and this, he says, is chiefly due to the changed circumstances in with the ruling race has found itself. Europeans in India are mere birds of passage. Increased facility of communication has made them look upon their sojourn in

India as more an exile. There is nothing to bind them to this land; and, as also a very large number of Europeans are resident in India, they are able to find companions among their own kinsfolk, and shrink from all avoidable communication from others. A few among them may associate with the natives from a sense of duty, but for their social and moral needs their own countrymen are sufficient, and not one Englishman in a thousand, when the hour comes for leaving India for good, is sensible of a wrench, of a void being created in his life, by the separation from any native whom he has known.

Natives should be more bold and straightforward in their intercourse with Europeans. If there is anything which a European looks upon as an indication of inferiority, it is that cringing and fawning tendency which is so conspicuous is the lower classes of the natives of India. Human nature is always tickled by flattery and nourished by servile obsequiousness. Natives, at the same time, should take care that straightforwardness does not degenerate into arrogance or impudence. They should also try and learn the manners and etiquette of English society. It is with the English more than with any other nation that "manners maketh the man." There is, of course, much that is artificial in English society with which an Oriental finds himself unable to reconcile. Weightier matters of the law are often overlooked, while much stress is laid on the mint and cummin and anise of fashion and convention; but with the English inexorable etiquette is imperative in its demands, and will be satisfied with no less than full and absolute obedience to the letter of its laws. The complete ignorance of the conventional rules and forms of English life places the native in a very awkward predicament. When, for the first time, he finds himself in company with English ladies and gentlemen, he feels as if he were anything but in his right

place; he is deprived of all power whether of speech or action; he is literally paralysed. He sits disconsolate in a corner, afraid to speak or move as if "wisdom gets its gems by gaping." The whole thing often takes the form of a tragic comedy where the hero is truly a tragic picture. His perplexed airs, his rustic manners, and embarrassed gait, when joined with more serious violations of etiquette, succeed only too well in making him an object of pity if not of contempt.

> "Oft it chances in particular men
> That for some vicious mole of nature in them,
> * * * * * * these men
> Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
> Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,
> Their virtues else, be they as pure as grace,
> As infinite as man may undergo,
> Shall in the general censure take corruption
> From that particular fault."

There is one question connected with this subject which I am tempted to discuss, and that is the political effects of the estrangement of the two communities; but the subject being a difficult one, I leave it to more competent men. A few words, however, with reference to it, I may be excused for saying here. It is absolutely essential for a foreign Government, in order to be successful in the administration of India, that it should understand the feelings, habits and institutions of the people over whom it holds sway. Legislation, taxation and the proper Government of a people require intimate knowledge of the people to be governed. A good Government ought to aim at the maximum of happiness and minimum of discontent in its subjects. This may be the philosophical ideal, but still every possible approximation must be made towards its realization. If much is not done in this direction the people will bear the yoke sullenly and with discontent. To bind natives by

ties of gratitude is much better than overawing them by physical force. In writing thus, however, I am fully sensible of the existence in our midst of those sterling Englishmen and Englishwomen, who leave no stone unturned to keep up the happiest possible relationship between the natives and themselves. These are the salt of the English community. It is their presence that makes us love and respect our foreign rulers, and it is their influence that counteracts the evil effects of the presence of some ruffianly Europeans in our midst. There is one thing for which we Madrasees ought to be very thankful. I think I am right in saying that the relation between the Natives and Europeans in our Presidency is far more cordial than in any other part of India. At all events there is more sympathy between the two races here than in Bengal. We natives of the benighted Presidency had our equilibrium undisturbed even during the discussions of the Ilbert Bill. Even in the heat of that controversy Englishmen and Natives in this Presidency treated each other with the utmost consideration, courtesy and kindness.

In conclusion, let me say a few words about the practical methods that may be adopted with the object of promoting a more intimate social relation between Europeans and Natives. The establishment of Cosmopolitan Clubs is one step that is supposed to have been gained in the bringing about of a better understanding, but I fear very much the experiment that has been tried in Madras has not been a success from this point of view. Social gatherings are coming to be the order of the day. They, no doubt, do great good, as they facilitate the interchange of ideas and conduce to greter familiarity ; but it all depends upon the way in which they are conducted. It often happens that at these gatherings the Europeans congregate together leaving the natives to enjoy intercourse among themselves. An Englishman seems to be keenly

sensitive to the opinions of his fellowmen; and so long as fraternising with natives has not become the fashion in society, he would not go out of his way to mix freely with his native fellow citizens.* The fact is, many sacrifices have to be made on both sides before a greater reunion is established between the two races. Natives ought to be admitted socially to the conversational circles of Europeans. They ought not to be regarded as an inferior race, altogether unfitted for polite society. They have, of course, their peculiarities as much as other people; but it is by the constant collision of friendly intercommunication that the angles of difference are broken off and polished down. Although it is said that familiarity breeds contempt, yet there are not wanting instances in which, when it has been once established, people have come to esteem one another, whatever may be their national antipathies. The educated Natives, on the other hand, must try to make themselves acceptable to Europeans by adopting a grateful and gentlemanly bearing, and a polished and courteous mode of address. They ought always to be loyal to Englishmen for what they have done and intend doing for India. Europeans, too, should take a keener interest in all that appertains to their Indian fellow subjects. Their short stay in India ought to be devoted, as much as possible, to the cultivation of friendly interests and social amenities. The late Lord Hobart, addressing an Indian audience on this very subject, once said, "the mere accident of race or faith, can never affect either the motive or the obligation of mutual friendliness and respect, and that whether born in England or India, and whatever may be the creeds and dogmas which have kept them so lamentably asunder, their mutual interest for the present and their hope for the future is, in reality, the same." These are pregnant words of wisdom, and if both Natives and Europeans would give up minor prejudices which must sooner or later melt away

before the sympathy of thought and feeling, thought strong enough to defy time and civilization, incalculable good would result. And let Englishmen in India remember this, that England's work in India does not consist merely in giving good laws, preserving peace, administering justice, preventing foreign aggression, checking famines, educating the people, and developing the trade and the material resources of the country; all these without the existence of a cordial and sympathetic feeling between Indians and Englishmen are useless. Let, therefore, the people of England and India join heart and hand in united efforts for the cultivation of each other's good will; let those in authority assume an attitude of kindness and genuine sympathy towards the natives; let individual Englishmen, laying aside all prejudices, stretch out their right hand of fellowship to their Indian brethren; let English ladies break through their selfish excluveness and endeavour to do something more for their benighted Hindu sisters; and let natives, educated natives more especially, be more loyal, be more grateful for all that England has done for India; let them not obstinately and foolishly misrepresent every act of the British Government,—let all this be done, and then there will be no more talk about the "ever widening gulf of personal dislikes" that separates the rulers from the ruled.

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X.—Social Purity and the Anti-nautch Movement

By R. Venkataratnam Naidu, Esq., M.A., L.T.,
Head Master, Mahboob College, Secunderabad.

"There is but one temple in the world, and that temple is the body of man."—*Novalis.*

"The crucial index of a man's character is, as a rule, his relation to the opposite sex."—*W. T. Stead.*

"The life of the nation depends on the life of the home, and that of the home depends on the purity of the individual."—*Dr. Moorhouse, Bp. of Manchester.*

"Not to turn human brutal, but to build
Divine on human, pleasure came from Heaven.
Pleasure first succours virtue; in return
Virtue gives pleasure an eternal reign.—*Young.*

"Her (the dancing-girl's) blandishments are India's ruin. Alas! her smile is India's death."—*Babu K. C. Sen.*

I.—The three sanctions.

The growth of a community, as a moral organism, is marked by three distinct stages, according as legislation, public opinion or individual conviction is recognised as the supreme sanction for conduct. In an aboriginal state, these three motives to action may remain undifferentiated. But as a community emerges into view as an organised body with a definite course of existence, it is characterized by that "immobility," as Guizot has it, which naturally results from the government undertaking to control the entire life of the community. The individual is aware of no duties, and moved by no desires apart from those demanded or sanctioned by the clan or caste as a self-governing body. A constant reference is tacitly or expressly made to the wish of the "elders"—the representatives of the conscience and the commands of the community. This is the era of tutelage. It is, however, perceived, sooner or later, by all advancing communities that, long as may be "the arm of law," it cannot reach and adjust the inner work-

ings of society. Man is not merely a subject but also a citizen; and his relations with his neighbours are far too numerous and complex to be regulated by any government. The thousand and one occasions which bring man and man together in the daily transactions of life, must necessarily lie beyond the ken of the most watchful, and elude the grasp of the most vigorous, of political bodies. Thus society supplements government; and able to employ a closer surveillance and a more effective means of influence, it moulds, as no political administration can, the complete round of existence. Nothing is too common-place and nothing too personal for its intervention. This is the era of communion. But if man is not a machine to be always governed, neither is he a sheep to be always led. The inborn inclination to "individuality" will assert itself, despite the most strenuous efforts to keep it down. The threats of political pain or social ruin will be ignored, at least by a select number; at first a few and gradually several more will demand the birth-right—as an American writer suggests of each soul—to have a vote. A community thus enters upon an almost unlimited prospect of progress and happiness, as its members awaken to a sense of individuality—of self-regarding virtues—of self-reliance and self-denial—of self-reverence and self-consecration—of hope and service,—in a word, to the sense that man has to "absolve" himself to himself before he conforms to society or courtesies to Cæsar. Conformity is superseded by individuality; convention yields place to conviction. Alike in the daring heroism of mighty crises and the silent service of routine life, the prime concern is to do what is personally felt to be proper. This is the era of 'single manhood.'

The distinct nature and the relative merit of these three springs of action are clearly perceived when examined with reference to a few concrete instances. Legislation makes the physicial security and the material well-being of the nation its special charge; public opinion

controls the social relations and defines the more patent domestic responsibilities; the sense of individuality seeks to strengthen and refine the secret motive or the innate incitement to spontaneous activity. With such materially different aims, these great agencies to the moral elevation of a society are appropriated to essentially different spheres of influence. To take a few instances from our country: legislation abolishes *sati* and enunciates the legal rights of the widow; crude public opinion, however, cripples all attempts to help the re-marriage of women; and the gloom that darkens the path of countless victims to a cruel and senseless custom can be chased away only by the illumined consciences and the enlightened sentiments of individuals. Again, legislation may fix the age of consent or restore conjugal rights; public opinion alone can discourage the silent oppression by a heartless husband; and only the loyal heart moved by none but chaste desires can make wedded life the stepping-stone to a regenerated humanity. Legislation may raise the cost of drink and minimise the occasions for temptation; nothing save public opinion can visit the sot with the full discredit which he courts by his slavish habit; whereas a keen sense of inborn majesty is a pre-requisite to the indignation which (with Manu) brands debasing inebriety as among of the five "deadly sins." Legislation may punish immodest soliciting of attention in public; but it needs a strong public opinion to vote indecent song and suggestion out of court; while the chastity that would rather pluck out the offending right eye than tarnish its native purity, is bred only in the soul that delights in the law of righteousness. Thus legislation judges by the act, public opinion by the behaviour, personal responsibility by the witness within of motive and desire. Legislation compels the unaided helplessness of man; public opinion works upon his 'gregariousness'; personal responsibility draws out his manliness.

The three stages are not perforce mutually exclusive

—in time or in operation. The essential distinction between them lies not in their *when* but in their *whence* and *whither*, and not in the *acts* they approve but in the *end* they point to. The external aspect and the apparent tendency may seem to agree ; judged by what they appear to be, two lives may look much alike. Yet the laws they obey, the methods they employ and the aims they pursue, may be radically different, according as the main spring is the desire to serve the king, suit the times, or be loyal to the royal wtihin oneself. Hence the product of legislation is the law-abiding man, of public opinion the respectable man, of personal conviction the conscientious man; each good in his own way—the first as he is kept from harm, the second as he is pliant to the prevailing custom, the third as he honours his conscience as his king.

Thus judged, there is a distinct scale of importance—a real difference of moral worth—in the hierarchy of rights and duties, on account of the sanction they appeal to. The activity and authority of legislation necessarily confine themselves, for the most part, to those rights and duties which constitute what Carlyle terms "inferior criminality." Public opinion addresses itself to the one end of postponing personal taste to the general tendency. Individual responsibility, working into the inmost mines of motive, aim and method, seeks to produce what the same sage calls "superior morality." To this sacred class belong those personal virtues and private graces—veracity and honesty, chastity and sobriety—those eternal verities whose possession alone marks out man as the master-piece of creation. They are thus divinely ordained to the place of honour among virtues claiming our homage. Hence the importance and the authority of

II.—THE PLEA FOR SOCIAL PURITY.

Providence reveals its wisdom and manifests its love in the mysterious harmonies pre-arranged between objects seemingly opposed or unrelated. This divine ordering of

things is strikingly illustrated in the surprising "fellow-feeling" created and sustained between the strong and the weak, the vigorous and the tender, the restless and the serene, the longing and the lovely. The depth of those profound relations between friend and friend, parent and child, pupil and preceptor, husband and wife, what plummet of intellectual calculations can sound? They are far-reaching as Infinity, sublime as Heaven. This fact makes it essential to the very existence of a nation that these sacred weldings of soul to soul to should never be suffered to be loosened by lust or tinkered with baseness. Apart from all "local conditions," the intimate inter-dependence of the sexes is recognised always and everywhere. They are meant by an eternal purpose to be each other's "helpmates" in a holy task—faithful co-workers in one "present paradise," joint-trustees of the generations to come. The profound responsibilities of parenthood, the devout sacrifices of wedlock, the simple trusts of childhood, demand that the inviolable sanctities of marriage shall be kept scrupulously pure. "If man is the head of woman, woman is the heart of man;" and out of the heart are the issues of life. That character is the backbone of a nation is almost a truism; but character has been compared to a bucket, and impurity to a leak at its bottom. "My strength," says Sir Galahad, "is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure." It argues a noble soul that cannot wrong a woman. A wag chafed Dryden at the utter spiritlessness of his "Spartan Hero" who could be alone with a beautiful woman and take no pleasure. "Yes," was the prompt and just reply, "you would have done otherwise, but you are no hero!" Gladstone has observed that "conjugal relation includes in itself all other loves;" and the *Mahabharata* defines the wife as "the friend in solitude, the father in duty, the mother in distress and the refuge in wilderness." Manu demands of him that would be a father—a noble image of the great Creator—to be wholly

satisfied with her he has taken unto wife, and guarantees good fortune to the house where the husband is content with the wife and the wife with the husband. The Christian teacher exhorts him that would acquire a soul's companion to give up his all for her sake. This comprehensive nature of the conjugal relation necessitates a corresponding rigidity in excluding everything partial or temporary, carnal or half-hearted, in the holy alliance of two hearts—in what has been happily termed "the harvest of a hundred years." In fine, the delights of the home spring from the purity of the conjugal relation, and the strength of the nation depends on the peacefulness of its homes. He has no country who has no home; and he has no home who does not rejoice in it as the sanctum of chastity and the shrine of love. The plea for social purity is thus

III.—A NATIONAL PROBLEM.

If progressive communities are, according to a high authority, distinguished by their readiness to harmonise legislation with growing public ideals, it is no less true of a healthy society that its declared intentions constantly adjust themselves to what is best—purest and noblest—in individual hope and experience. Laws, to be beneficial, should consult the view of the cultured; public opinion, to be honoured, should echo the voice of the oracles within. In the ultimate resort, the human heart—strong because pure, happy because temperate, sympathetic because self-denying—is the spring of all law or custom approved of man; and the essence of righteousness is in the freedom and the directness of personal conviction. Thus viewed, social purity challenges recognition as one of those prime principles which, throned in the hearts of the "chosen ones," invariably raise the tone of society and elevate the standard of legislation. The position of woman in the home as the feeder of passion or the first preceptress of posterity, as the neglected drudge at the hearth or the unrivalled queen of the heart, either dooms a society to the

death of self-exhausting vigour blesses it with abiding strength and stability. National vigilance, therefore, is nowhere else more imperatively required than in demanding thorough honesty—whole-hearted sincerity—perfect gentlemanliness—in that attachment of soul to soul which, when genuine, makes man an apprentice to Heaven, but, when spurious, earns for him the prerogative of the brute. Social purity thus acquires an honoured place in that constellation of sublime virtues without whose guidance the horoscope of a nation's greatness can never be cast. "Believe me," says an authority on this subject, "the maintenance of purity in the relations of the sexes is vital to national greatness and prosperity. For in the relations of husband to wife, parent to child, through long gradations of mutual tenderness and support, each is bound to each, and all 'with golden chains about the feet of God.' Break once these golden links of loving help and service, and all the strong bonds of civilised society will be weakened and loosed."

Nor is our society without several dark features that compel earnest attention in this direction. The land where popular religion enriches the value of paradise with the unfading charms of celestial nymphs and offers their favours as the reward (be it only as a second choice) to the highest of religious rites; the country where the current faith often formulates itself into a most subtle or seductive order of amorous poetry, which piety does not scruple to sing and modesty does not blush to hear; the empire whose armed defenders are provided in "regimental bazaars" with markets covert for the offer of winsome flesh to lucrative lust, and whose landed aristocracy often own a vulgar herd of nondescript men and women; the society infected with customs that lend the dignity of caste to the basest of professions, or work upon the ignorance of devotion to gratify sacerdotal sensuality; the community that places no legal limits upon a man's marrying capacity, but is not

unwilling to visit with the persecution of law the woman who will not yield her person where her heart is not; the nation that hurries millions through a married life they are not equal to, and thrusts on millions of others a celibacy they dare not honourably set aside—India and the Indian nation cannot, for their very name and existence in the honoured circle of the civilised, afford to omit this question from a comprehensive plan of social reform and progress. In root-principle, it is of the same stock as temperance; in main argument, it is akin to the great problems connected with the position and function of woman in home and society; in its direct aims, it touches closely the vital questions of the right use of religious endowments, the great responsibilities of leaders and the proper training of the young; in its ultimate results, it is not without a bearing upon what foreign travel is meant to achieve or the elevation of the lower classes is expected to realise.

IV.—WHAT IS SOCIAL PURITY?

Man is the crown of creation even from the matchless complexity (with the immense possibilities) of his nature. There is, no doubt, a charm in simplicity, just as there is music in a monochord. But that harmony in which, according to the poet, this universal frame began and to which it has been growing, has its soul in well-ordered complexity. We are told, in the name of evolution, that the human embryo races through a course of diversified growth which in prehuman periods took ages to accomplish; and it needs no great stretch of imagination to see that the body which is the focussed result of a hundred scattered processes of development enshrines a being that contains a myriad avenues to mental and moral progress. This distinguishing feature of man makes sound character a highly complex instrument, capable of producing angelic symphony but easily liable to get out of tune. The sole remedy lies in that serenity which denotes equal growth on all sides—that purity which points the way to perfection—that

cleanliness of heart which is next to godliness of soul. Purity is to character what symmetry is to beauty—not an accident of adornment, but an essential of structure. It denotes that apt assortment of man's desires and appetites, in deference to his special powers and faculties of thought and speech, emotion and arts, will and work, which, by subordinating the physical to the intellectual, postponing the immediate to the final, and surrendering the pleasing for the good, combines in man the sacred functions of the heir of ages past and the architect of centuries to come. It consists in that uniformity of development—that moving forward of the whole man, to which alone is awarded the maximum of good. It is that conservation of vital energy which comes of a wise correlation of vital forces. It is that discipline of the heart under which man's desires and powers are told off to their respective posts and through their conjoint watch and work win the great victories of life. In fine, it is that attuning of the soul to the processes of nature as the chosen purposes of God which ought to make every man what only an occasional sage now is—the interpreter of life in the terms of eternity and the beautifier of earth as the out-house of Heaven. Applied to social life, Purity is complete submission—whole-hearted obeisance—soul-deep homage—to what the sublimest English poet has named "the sun-clad power of chastity." It is a call to the spouse to rejoice in the spouse, and a command to the parent to be pure amidst pleasure. It is a recognition of the stern truth that the righteousness which exalteth a nation has its secret strength in 'a well-governed and wise appetite,' regulated by the 'holy dictate of spare temperance.' It is a caution to the community that 'to hastening ills a prey' is the land where the heat of passion is preferred to the warmth of love, and the 'prompture of blood' is followed as the law of life. It holds (with Manu) that culpable attention to another's consort is the surest course to curtail

one's length of days; and it condemns (with Shakespeare) as comrades in iniquity the rake and the murderer—"the saucy sweetness that coins heaven's image on stamps that are forbid" and the reckless villainy that "falsely takes away a life true made." It declares that the happiness of marriage shall be earned only by the responsibilities of marriage, and the joys of family life shall be the prize only of those willing to take its irrevocable yoke. It esteems human existence too sacred to be cradled in lust; it proclaims the marriage bond too strong to be dissolved by freaks of taste, defects of law, or even the transitions of death. It honours holy wedlock as an ordinance of the Most High and, hence, requires the absolute freedom (to adopt F. Harrison's happy language), from even "one passing shadow of suspicion," of "the inviolable institution whereon the happiness of all depends." It finally warns the creature that "hooks its right and wrong to the appetite" to beware and be not deceived that "neither the sensual nor the drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God."

A very thoughtful and charming writer has pointed out that the benevolent nature of the government of this world is strikingly evinced in the boundless bounty with which gratification is added to relief, pleasure is attached to duty, and enjoyment is infused into necessity. Thus, while light and sound might have sufficed for ordinary life, wisdom and love mellow the one into music and the other into rainbow. Hunger might be met with food, but a relish is placed in the palate; and touch is endowed with not only the sensitiveness of a thermometer but also the living sympathies of a flower. Life is thus everywhere waited on by pleasure; but it constitutes all the difference between animal and man how pleasure is used. To pursue pleasure as the purpose of life is the animal; to subject pleasure to the purpose of life is man. That follows the lead of instinct, this guides the instinct with reason. Thus the animal is the creature of the day; but man is the pilgrim of eter-

nity. This distinguishing supremacy makes in him pleasure the hand-maid to progress—not an alien to be rejected, but a servant to be controlled; not a disease to be rooted out, but an impulse to be regulated. "Temperance"—wise moderation in the legitimate, cheerful abstinence from the forbidden—is, accordingly, the only law befitting man; and purity is temperance in that supreme relation of the sexes which, as regulating the home, prescribing the ideals of society and linking generation to generation, sways the destinies of our race.* Thus social purity is the regulation of our appetites by our higher nature as a course of life the most favourable to complete growth. "There is," says a vigorous writer on this subject, "a dignity conferred upon us—bringing men near to the high and solemn relationship of the Creator"—in our possession of the power of re-production. With this honor comes the responsibility for every man to be pure and worthy in life and sentiment—in act, speech and thought. Social purity is chastity in body and chastity in mind—stern uncompromising repugnance to whatever is base or vulgar, indecent or immodest in study or pleasure, speech or song, faith or sentiment, thought or life—stout, unrelenting opposition, despite the threat of law or the frown of society, the curse of pretentious piety or the loss of spurious attachment, to every habit or custom, regulation or institution that defeats, or tends to defeat the high purpose of human life by gilding shame with fashion, or condoning carnal longing as venial. It brands as mean and cowardly, notwithstanding mimic nobility and affected bravery, the man who uses the frailty of the weak or the want of the needy for his own purpose, who haunts beauty till it is tarnished or pursues

* "Surely a day is coming when it will be known again what virtue is in purity and continence of life; how high, beneficent, sternly inexorable is the duty laid on every creature in regard to these particulars. Well, if such a day never come, then I perceive much else will never come. Magnanimity and depth of insight will never come; heroic purity of heart and of eye; noble pious valour to amend us and the age of bronze and lacquers, how can they ever come?"—*Carlyle.*

innocence till it is tainted, who repays friendship with infidelity, or puts on piety to pollute all the more securely. It demurs to the law, though backed up by power, that declines to protect the helpless from the ravage of the brutal or to screen the guileless from the craft of the wily. It decries the customs that invite undisguised shame to the hall of honor, or restore convicted impurity to the place of position. It silences the song that deifies the brute and proscribes the picture that commemorates the immodest. It loathes the book that feeds the budding mind with "the sewage of the slum," and rebukes the speech that glorifies "our swine enjoyments." It abhors the taste "that fancy begets on youthful thoughts," and denounces the desires that delight to wallow in "troughs of Zolaism." It stifles the thought that tinctures the soul with the hues of hell, and contemns the creed that caters to the carnal and calls it religion. On the other hand, it honors the life that never deviates into guilty pleasure, and counts him a hero who always keeps the citadel of his senses. It upholds the law that vindicates morality, and espouses the custom that conforms to righteousness. It rejoices in the speech that wells up from a clean heart and cultivates the taste that contemplates the sublime. It welcomes the song that softens the savage in man, and prizes the art that immortalises the pure. It nourishes the thought that aspires after the true, and lives by the faith that adores the All-Holy.* In a word, it consecrates the whole life from its cradle of childhood to its culmination of sagehood to the hastening of that 'far-off divine-event' when man and woman, through their hallowed union, will achieve the fulness of regenerated self—that sovereign power (in Tennyson's ever happy words) which consists in self-controlling strength and self-knowing wisdom, in self-denying happiness and self-reverencing goodness.

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* See the specimen Purity Pledges at the end.

This holy end kept in view makes marriage the most hallowed of sacraments, though all the same the freest of choices—that devout covenant of soul with soul, that sacred exchange of heart for heart which to force is the lowest slavery, and which to avoid is the basest selfishness. To enquire how marriage originated is outside the province of this paper. It suffices for the present purpose to point out that true national progress has everywhere run parallel to an increasing sense of the sacredness of the family tie. So far as it can be traced, the ascent of mankind along the heights of civilisation has been in the direction of constitutional monarchy as the strongest bulwark of the state, and of "legalised monogamy" as the surest foundation of the home. But monogamy, like monotheism, largely fails in its results when inherited as tradition or assumed as external conformity. Thus monogamy may degenerate into what has heartlessly been travestied as "one to one being cursedly confined," as monotheism may point only to a cold eternal something or an abstract reign of law. But elevated to supreme rule over the whole sphere of life, this "maiden passion for a maid" is the bountiful dispenser of "all that makes a man." In this "single love," as Ruskin has it, "is the sanctification of all man's strength, and the continuance of all his purposes." The true test of monogamy is the monocracy of the whole heart by the one all-endearing, as the true mark of monotheism is the monolatry, with the whole soul, of the One All-sufficient. The essence of both is the complete devotion of one to the one; in both, it is alone with the alone.

> "O! there is something in marriage, like the veil of the
> temple of old,
> That screened the Holy of holies with blue and purple
> and gold!
> Something that makes a chamber, where only the one may
> come,
> A sacredness, too, and a silence, where joy that is deepest
> is dumb."

And social purity seeks to guard the sacredness of this 'chamber' with a vigilance and a devotion too wakeful for the sliest insinuation and too firm for the hardest temptation, and to adorn and enrich it with the most glowing emotions of the heart, and the most sublime offerings of the soul.

V.—SOME SPECIAL ASPECTS OF SOCIAL PURITY

may next be glanced at, with particular reference to our social conditions. A word of caution and of request may here be necessary that, as one descends from fine principles to unpleasant particulars, one runs the risk of offending "ears polite." But the duty of speaking an unwelcome truth, according to occasion, being granted, the kind reader's judgment may decide whether the occasion does not exist. The first, then, of these special aspects is

(a) Religion and Social Purity.

The intensest devotional attitude towards God is that sweet ecstacy—that enchanting *mâdhuryam*—in which He is "the spouse Divine of human soul." It is a conception at once homely, precise and inspiring—not distant awe, vague familiarity or helpless trust, but voluntary and cheerful self-dedication. This master-passion of the soul naturally shadows itself forth in a thousand suggestive figures or allusions. But there are two distinct stages in a complete religious career—the weaning of the soul from matter and the infusion of the soul into matter; the exodus into the wilderness to fast, the return into the world to preside over the feast; the rigid abstinence from the world's revelries, the free participation in the world's charities. In the first, morality is the martial law regulating religion; in the second, religion is the vision on the mountain-top receiving a divine decalogue for the crowd below. The former is the age of discipleship, the latter the age of kinship, to God. But when this order is violated, as it often must be in a country where "faith" is in so many cases divorced from

"light," the liberties of the later are anticipated as the licenses of the earlier stage, the counters of mature wisdom pass as the coin of green ignorance, and the ecstacies of the soul are perverted into the indulgences of the sense. Thus it comes of a huge unsettling of matters spiritual that many a custom or institution has risen in our midst, whose sole justification is that it is associated with the great name of religion and shall not be questioned. But who can prevent the little leaven from doing its work? The so-called faith of the majority has not only been stereotyped into a "zodiac of feasts and fasts" but also degenerated in not a few instances into pomp and performances far from elevating, if not positively offensive. Occasions there be when unbridled enthusiasm, not content with bathing and feeding, bedding and wedding "the Lord of the Universe," plans for him a nocturnal adventure from which he is supposed to return *incognito* before dawn; or when blind eagerness, toiling to scale the heights of Indra's blissful abode, not only marks its progress with holocausts of dumb victims but culminates in a deed of sanctimonious sin that no system of morality dare justify. Celibacy, that self-forgetfulness in the service of the Lord, dwindles into a social fiction, till a vestal *deva dasi* is represented by a shame-proof *demimonde*,* and priestly vows betray their hollowness now in nude photos, then in criminal prodigality, anon in the incarceration of a holy priest for gallantry, and again in the unfolding in a court of law of the life-history of a "born-lord" of countless devotees under circumstances revolting enough for a foreigner to characterise

* "Our temples cannot improve unless the dancing girl be first kicked out," was the remark made by the Hon'ble Mr. P. Ananda Charlu, when the present writer happened once to travel with him. As an interesting experiment, it may be mentioned that a friend of the writer's, who is the manager of an important temple in the Northern Circars, "disallowed dancing girls about four years ago" and he states that "no want was felt at any time in the real worship and temple service on account of their absence," that it "does not show any change for the worse," and that "a great majority of the devotees feel it a change for the better, although there are a few vulgarly people that complain of it."

him as a creature not fit to be touched 'with a pair of hot tongs.' Devotion, that rejoicing of the soul in the graces of the Lord, degenerates into vagaries that embody themselves in images and pictures of ruthless realism with dissolute details, and express themselves in song or verse that bigoted partisans alone can misname piety. Esotericism, that panacea for all the spiritual ailments of India, would fain galvanise these dead bones into life; but while the subtle apologist points to a mystic inside—a light behind Parrhasius's curtain, the simple world accepts the pleading to justify the palpable outside, and vulgar orgies and voluptuous *leelas*, amorous ditties and "unholy *holis*" (as some one termed them) stand out among the main features of the faith of the majority. Nor does the evil stop here. This culpable indifference to the essentials of morality in the most absorbing concerns of life robs religion, oftentimes, of even ordinary solemnity and reverence; and not a few of the localities credited with the odour of sanctity need only a closer examination to smell with impurity. Deplorable as these things are, they are not beyond human help. The remedy lies with the community; which, outside the callousness of custom, is uncommonly sensitive in such matters. Let only men of light and leading look facts square in the face, let them enforce "morals" before they sanction "symbols" and insist on sterling character as the first proof of pious conviction; and this Augean stable will soon be cleansed. In our national ideals and traditions there is enough of chaste piety and inspiring purity to justify the hope that if only this outer "abasement" could be swept out and the native grandeur revealed to the people's heart, our nation, too, may realise and appreciate the sublime truth that piety without purity is baser than gross superstition—it is sanctified sin. But it is one thing to hold out indiscriminately on our past greatness; it is another to emulate it judiciously. The next topic that may engage attention is

(b) Public Recognition of Social Impurity

in any form and with any excuse. Ruskin has taught us that the acme of goodness is not merely to *do* the right thing but also to *love* it and *enjoy* it. The reverse is equally true that virtue fails of its essence if its abstinence from vice does not amount to a total refusal to lend countenance to it to any degree and under any circumstances. To pity and pass by the weakness that hides itself in the shade may be charity; to note impurity as an unfortunate element in some lives and bind it down with restraints and penalties calculated to confine it to its natural place as the grossest of indulgences—the last and the lowest of "deadly sins," may be statesmanship; to devise means and employ agencies to warn the unsuspecting or to reclaim the erring, may be philanthropy; but to trim immorality with fashion, to furnish it with facility, to bolster it up with an apology, to charter it with a passport, or to sanction it with a custom, is to set a premium on vice and to condemn the state or the society as "organised selfishness." A state or a society is not bound to procure for the carnal cravings of the sensual any more than to provide for the gambling tendencies or the thieving propensities of the avaricious. On the other hand, nations or communities are no less amenable than individuals to the ethical law that *not* to rebuke or protest against open vice is to half sanction it. The government that undertakes to protect base gratification for its natural sting or merited humiliation, incurs the heavy responsibility of furthering vice by making impurity venial. As Mrs. Josephine Butler has pointed out, state regulation of vice is but state sanction of vice; it is only 'drilling, barracking and licensing vice'—supplying 'state-accredited instruments' for the most debasing use. Likewise, the society that assigns in its fold a recognised place and position to professional lewdness—aye, confers on it the dignity of a caste and tricks it out with a catching name, condemns itself as

"procuress to hell." The future of a nation depends wholly upon its estimate of man—its hope of human possibilities; and the community that counts social impurity, not a temporary weakness to be strenuously overcome, but a lasting disability to be reduced to a custom, looks down upon man as an "appetite incarnate." Says an eminent medical authority, "as soon prescribe theft or lying or anything else that God has forbidden as prescribe inchastity";* and what is public recognition of social impurity by state or by society but this culpable prescription of inchastity? Closely related to this is the rather exciting question of

(c) *Social Purity and Public life.*

If, as Carlyle holds, "society everywhere is some representation of a graduated worship of heroes," the life of a leader is a model to his contemporaries and a heritage to posterity. It illustrates the moral ideal to be imitated by a thousand admirers; it maps out the moral path to be trodden by a thousand followers. When one of England's wisest politicians required that he who would be a statesman must first prove himself a gentleman, the demand really meant that the aspiration to be honoured with public confidence implied the covenant to be clean and pure beyond all imputation, above every suspicion. If, as Lecky states, "pure domestic life" is amongst the 'strongest' of those forces that bear a nation onward to improvement, the private life of one that would mould the thoughts, guide the energies and thus shape the destinies of a nation is a public concern. Let it be once conceded that there is good ground for the many restrictions which a wise government imposes on its public servants; and it will be idle to

* The opinions of two other eminent medical men may be cited here. According to one of them, "there are no organs so much under control as those of generation. Their qualities peculiarly adapt them to subserviency to man's moral nature." The other observes, "No man ever yet was in the slightest degree or way worse for perfect continence, or the better for incontinence."

contend that those who would sketch the career of a race need not rise to the standard of those who manage its passing interests, or that the integrity enforced about "barbaric pearl and gold" may be safely relaxed concerning what is the most precious jewel of woman and the dearest possession of man. Both may be private as single incidents; but both are public as examples or precedents. In both, the weakness of the few becomes the excuse of the many. In both, the purpose of life is vitiated and the ideal of life is lowered. As Milton very truly points out, it implies a certain lack of manly greatness—a weak mind that "aims not beyond higher design" than mere enjoyment—to succumb to amorous charms. Inchastity, as Mohammad warns us, is not merely an evil course but a foul thing. Does it not, further, sound as mere mockery that the call to fairness and equity should come from one who does not scruple to despoil a woman of her birth-right or a home of its happiness, or who does not hesitate to snatch a selfish pleasure which, in one respect, is blacker than the vilest murder as invariably damaging the peace or the hope of an accomplice. Concupiscence, no less than cupidity, is incompatible with greatness—with real integrity and wide catholicity; and to ignore this fact is to drop half our kind out of account. Quite unavailing is the defence which compares the disinterested leader of a nation's hopes and activities to an agent that knows no better motive than money—a lawyer, a doctor or an engineer. It is a sign of diseased enthusiasm, if not a mark of the rather low notion prevailing about apparently high objects of life, that one who surrenders comfort and position and accepts loss and reproach for a humble or neglected cause, is placed by his professed supporters under the same vinculum with the skilled labourer ever available to the party that "pays." Unless discipleship deteriorate into what Carlyle stigmatises as 'spanielship,' it cannot be true

that he who may be the sorriest or the most indifferent of mortals and he who fears the Lord and walks in the light of His wisdom are alike fitted to marshal the energies and forecast the future of a nation. The former is "a soldier of fortune" whose cleverness any one may buy; the latter, "a guide, philosopher and friend" entitled to our profoundest respect and, on that very account, bound to satisfy our highest expectations in social virtues. He is a 'Representative Man' whom wisdom and gratitude alike would decline to measure with the mercenary standard of a paid pilot; and to expect this personal purity in one thus exalted is but a fresh instance of the ancient truth that he who will control shall begin with self-control, that he who will rule without shall not himself be subject to anarchy within.—Not a few of the supporters of this cause may advantageously

(*d*) *Work among the children and the youth*

of the land. Apart from the nature of public education now in vogue in India, much too little—notoriously little—is being done to build up character—to form noble virtues and create high aspirations—in the generations-to-be. It is, indeed, surprising that where such scanty attention is given to the healthy rearing-up of children, the tone of general morality is, nevertheless, so satisfactory. That betokens the innate goodness of human nature and the intrinsic worth of some of the principles, now hardened into customs, which were the original moulds of our national life. But the painful experience of every one that has endeavoured to be of any public service almost invariably reports that, for a large and civilised nation, most disappointingly few are the instances in which our countrymen dare rise above what may be called "neighbourly goodness." A chivalric spirit (if that term be expressive enough) is woefully wanting among us. It is not mere altruism: it is, so to speak, social transcendentalism. This

national drawback early suggests itself in our youth. Our boys may be rightly credited with being more docile and better-behaved than their western brethren; but are they not also more 'insinuating' in their ways—more wanting in 'directness'?* Does not a tendency to "look about" when they ought to "look in the face" early sprout up in them? One chief reason for this defect is the position of women in India—not, as is generally said, low or hard, but uninspiring—wanting in the capacity to evolve in man that refined gentleness which, without weakening the vigour, strains out the coarseness. Brought up under such "home influences," our youth betray either precocious vulgarity in the lower classes, or "studied" bashfulness (young Marlow like) in the higher classes, of society. Either way there is an absence of 'naturalness;' which is partly the result and partly the cause of the characteristic, almost national, of so many of our homes; which, again, are not impure or unhappy, but uninvigorating. All work among our boys and youth, not expressly educational, has, therefore, to be directed towards evoking this *verve*—this instinctive fairness and natural fineness—in them. Not that efforts bearing directly on our question are quite superfluous. If the experience of teachers, watchful and themselves good, counts for aught, and if the painful tale often told by doctors of all denominations be even partially true, there are quite too many instances, often leading to grave consequences and at times ending even fatally, of the early tasting of the forbidden fruit;† and it cannot be better in a country where so few feel the duty of placing a

* A careful and sympathetic European observer of our nation has remarked that India produces neither so many rogues nor so many heroes as a country in the West does.

† Alarming particularly are the accounts given by several medical men of "that hideous sin, engendered by vice and practised in solitude" by a large number of students and other young men.—It is to be hoped that the type of hotels and "eating houses" from which nefarious stories come out occasionally, like blasts from hell, is fast becoming obsolete.

check upon their tongues or their tastes for their dear ones' sake, and where painted Jezebels are permitted to jaunt in the most respectable localities, at times in the very neighbourhood of educational institutions. But the main effort has to be devoted to preventative rather than to remedial work—to fore-arm the youth against coming dangers rather than to snatch them from present evils. What our community needs is the formation of associations—on the lines of 'the guilds of honour' in the west—with membership large enough for fraternity but quite within bounds for discipline, manned in a fostering spirit by persons that have a sacred sense of the promise and the possibility of childhood or youth, and inculcating, on broad principles and in devout reverence, along with spotless purity the kindred virtues of unflinching honesty and large-hearted magnanimity. This will necessarily be slow work but, in the fulness of God's time, sure. It is true that there are already many institutions in the land, professing to promote this very end; but the question has to be boldly asked and honestly answered whether their strong point is ethics or athletics—be the latter lingual or physical. A fair beginning must be made; and if anywhere, it is in this work that men are superior to methods. Every life lived under the Great Task-Master's eye is available here.—As the last of these special aspects of the question may be considered the movement in which so much of the interest and attention of the friends of this reform has, for obvious reasons, been centering—

(e) the Anti-nautch Movement.

It was, perhaps, unfortunate, though evidently unavoidable as a beginning, that the purity movement was started in the concrete form of the anti-nautch agitation. Friends ready to further the cause failed in many instances to realise the basal principle; while persons startled by its

novelty put upon it most fantastic constructions. One party traced it to a lurking hatred for the dancing-girl; another discovered in it a crusade against music; to some it appeared to be a graceless exposure of a small national weakness; to some others it was no better than a Quixotic attempt to cure the irremediable. Even among friends but few realised that to discourage *nautch* was to demand purity in other respects, and to decline to employ the dancing-girl's entertainment was to disapprove open impurity wherever found. When, therefore, a seemingly superfluous memorial to a distant government disclosed a personal promise "to do likewise," enthusiasm cooled down and eloquence was hushed in not a few cases. When, next, it gradually came out that to condemn the *nautch* was to covenant for an earnest endeavour after purity in thought, speech and act, many more shrank from so heavy a demand. When, at a later stage, the principle that would proscribe polluted pleasure was sought to be applied to public life, some of even those that had been the most forward to attack were also among the foremost to sound the retreat. But the anti-nautch movement would be a huge cry for a trifle—almost a 'much ado about nothing'—unless it presented itself as an inalienable part of a great problem, a particular aspect of an important principle, a concrete instance of a lofty, though seemingly new-born ideal. Its basis is not in fine manners, but in good morals; its aim is not mere elegant breeding, but pure living. If every one espousing this movement has not realised this expectation, it is not the fault of the principle. Many are called, but few are chosen.

Among all the countries with which India would wish to compete in morals and in civilisation there is not one that accords to open, flagrant impurity such recognition as this country gives to the *nautch*-girl. Secret vice and veneered inchastity are to be found all the world over; but

immorality as a hereditary and acknowledged profession, living in peace and amity with and amidst other avocations, fortified against the attacks of time and change, and endowed with the privileges of social sanction, is peculiar to this land. By no other civilised people is the thin veil of music, as a profession, suffered so fully to cover (and for all social purposes so completely to atone for) the iniquity of a woman openly living a "fast life." In the temple she has not only the free and ready admission of any other lay person, but, in innumerable cases, a position next only to that of the priest or the manager. No part of a town is too respectable for her residence; no circle of society, too high for her invitation. No festive occasion, however auspicious, is complete without her presence: to receive a guest or to felicitate a friend, to honour a superior or to celebrate a jubilee, to solemnize a wedding or to initiate a child into learning—aye, at times, to welcome a spiritual head or to parade a religious reviver, her song is the *Te Deum* of thankful joy, her dance the exhilaration of enthusiasm. The benediction on many a solemn occasion is of her chanting; the longevity of connubial life for many a hopeful bride is secured through the talismanic "black beads" of her stringing. In religious processions hers is the lead, while the graceless priest with his unheeded jargon is exiled to a safe distance.* Famine-stricken parents, albeit of high caste, may surrender to her care and profession the child that a foreigner, however pure and respectable, may not apply for. In times of "legal" difficulties she may count upon the support of even some of the titled leaders of society privately to plead with the crude, stickling judge to do a little wrong in order to do a great right. But how this has come to be so, and why this is thus endured in a country otherwise jealous of female chastity, it is not very

* May it be reasonably hoped that the days are wholly gone when the carriages of the *elite* were her 'free conveyance,' and the wives of the fashionable were her "honorary maids"?

difficult to see. Of all the harmful consequences of the caste system none would seem to be so injurious as its tendency to place merit and demerit on a level. Both made customary, virtue is not necessarily honoured with social credit and vice is not perforce branded with social discredit. Not what is good but what is usual, is commendable; likewise, not what is bad but what is unusual, is condemnable. The national conscience is, in many important matters, hide-bound with custom. Hence the ruthless, sometimes savage, punishment of chance instances of secret vice, alongside of this disgusting indifference—nay, this culpable encouragement given socially through the *nautch*, and religiously through temple-service—to innumerable cases* of open shamelessness.

That these women have not always been thus patronised, is evident from ancient literature. They seem to have begun as virgins dedicated to the service of religion—vestals that forgot the world in the thoughts of Heaven. They were consecrated to the Lord; and to that age belongs the terrible warning that to approach one of the class criminally was more sinful than thus to approach even one's mother. It is of that by-gone period those well-meaning friends of India really think who defend the modern nautch-girl by unfairly comparing her with the medieval nun! But nothing is so frequently, though in most cases so imperfectly, imitated as religion; and the spontaneous self-forgetfulness of the first generations became the forced asceticism of those who came after them. The institution would appear to have been in a transitional stage—not perhaps a caste, but not without a deep touch of the world—at the time of Buddha; who had an enthusiastic admirer

* The exact number of these unfortunate women in India cannot be ascertained. According to the Census of 1891, those following "indefinite and disreputable occupations" were returned as 1,562,981; and actors, singers, dancers and their accompanists numbered 270,956. Probably, several appeared under the respectable heading of temple-servants.

in Ambapali, who could vie with great lords in position and opulence. With that mighty emphasis laid upon pure life which distinguished Buddhism, the women of light song and dance necessarily went down in *status*. In the day "of* the Chinese pilgrims the singer and the courtezan were compelled to reside outside the village-walls, along with the fisherman and the scavenger." History, however, "seems* to indicate that she was not kept out long;" and as that wave of moral force which is associated with the name of Buddha ebbed away, she could, by the age of the dramas, regain through her charms and accomplishments the social position no longer merited by her character. As in course of centuries custom favoured by convenience fossilised every profession into a caste, that encyclopœdic organisation—the Hindu Society, with its round-robin of castes—could accommodate professional lewdness with a plea and a place, just as it furnished the professional thief with a guide-book and a presiding-genius. What comes by birth-right need not be earned by accomplishments; and "the general notion," as the Census Commissioner observes, "of the employment (at present) is that expressed in one of the schedules from a town in the north as *singing and enjoining sensual pleasures!*" Such have been the high origin and the low fall of a most unfortunate section of mother India's daughters; who (in the words of Prof. Sir W. Mon.-Williams) were once "patterns of piety and propriety," but are now "slaves to the licentious passions of the profligate." Is not society bound to help them up to a pure course of life? "How is it," asks that eminent temperance-preacher and great friend of India, the Revd. T. Evans, "that the temple Priests and sacred Brahmins do not step to the front to reform such a degrading abuse as this?" But the question

* Census of India, 1891—General Report, p. 110.

is really an appeal to the heart and the conscience of all educated India.

Custom, however hoary or wide-spread, though it may at times have a tempering effect, cannot make evil quite harmless; and far from light is the penalty that India has, silently and almost unconsciously, been paying for suffering this dark iniquity to live and thrive in her very bosom. Public recognition, by hiding the ugliness of a vice, makes it fashionable and thus costly. It sets up a competition where repugnance should be the only attitude. How prodigal in wealth and life this injurious indulgence has been, scores of impoverished families and hundreds of frustrated hopes—countless instances of disappointed careers, wasted opportunities, neglected affections and squandered fortunes—can amply testify.—Further, the desire for repentance is generally proportionate to the social odium attaching to a sin. "That would be a reproach to your mother; you only name me," was the proud retort of a smart dancing-girl to a filthy epithet used by the voluptuous Sirajuddoula. What is labeled as a necessary profession by society, is rarely felt to be a degrading avocation; and the consoling thought that one need not be better than is expected of one, easily satisfies the random compunction. That "want-begotten rest" which the poet rates lower than the worst slavery, is the doom of the unfortunate nursling of sin who is never led to feel that her tainted life marks her off as a moral leper. Thus the gate of repentance, open in Heaven's grace to the vilest sinner, is virtually closed by a custom-ridden community that thereby makes itself an abettor of impenitent guilt. How many a *Kánchanamâli* that would repent and seek the ways of the Lord, is being thus lulled into suicidal security by a society that thoughtlessly cries "Peace! Peace!" when there is no peace!—Again, nothing can justify the pleasure purchased with another's degradation. Be the

fictitious theory what it may, in real practice no woman is —no woman can by custom be—a musician in calling unless she also be a 'public woman' by profession. It is her fallen condition that makes her eligible for that occupation. Those who hastily compare her with the music-hall singer of the west, besides implying that two blacks make a white, decide the question on the ground of mere decency, forgetting that a 'fast life' is there an unacknowledged and incidental weakness, but here an avowed and necessary pre-requisite. If Manu is justified in charging with destruction of life him who cooks the meat or him who eats it no less than him who kills the sheep, does not the guilt or the shame of the dancing-girl's life fall to the account of those who accept her fallen condition as the pass-port to her profession as a singer or dancer?—Moreover, music, that divine art which "stoopeth so low as to soften brute beasts, yet mounteth as high as angels"—that "inarticulate, unfathomable speech which leads us to the edge of the infinite and lets us for a moment gaze into that"—that food of love and incense of the soul, has been largely neglected and completely disreputed by its unholy association with open immorality. Times were when sages did not decline to teach it and princesses did not disdain to learn it. Numerous instances could be cited of ladies of virtue and position acquiring and using this noble accomplishment. They felt no indignity, the public imputed no flaw, on that account.* But when society was unhinged by political disturbance and social deterioration, modesty retired, while impudence held the field undisputed. With return of peace and enlightenment, music should have been everywhere restored to its ancient prestige of an honourable accomplishment. But force of association has

* Mrs. Besant is reported to have observed recently: "Music has been excluded (from the education of girls) because of its shameful associations with the *nautch* girls. Your sons, if they want music, have to mix with the most shameful of characters."

fastened a tarnished name to it; and so long as it is condemned to be the prerogative of the Circes and the Syrens of our society—and it must be so till we decline to be charmed by the murky music of a maudlin—it must be content to be the bondmaid of iniquity—the stalking-horse for impurity to prey all the more securely.—Lastly, sullying, degrading, debasing must be the effect upon all—home and neighbourhood, wife and children, guests and friends—of an entertainment in which, pretending to no secrecy and reserving no modesty, she who, of all female kind, is the only one to take a hire for her 'person'—she who has forfeited the sweet name of sister—she who is nor maid, nor wife nor widow—she whose "heart is snares and nets" and whose "house is the way to hell," simulates a virtue she daily violates, or pleads for a pleasure she daily pollutes. To touch pitch and not be tarred, is to try to repeal an eternal ethical law. The weighty words of the learned and venerable Dr. Bhandarkar will suffice: "I have always been of the opinion that he who patronises dancing-girls does not sufficiently hate the immoral life which they professedly lead, or value as highly as he ought to do female purity, which is the soil on which the noble qualities of women grow. The institution of *nautch* cannot but have a debasing effect on the morality of men and women. I shall not, without strong proof, believe in a man's being a faithful husband, if he takes delight in giving *nautch*-parties and attending them. To have a *nautch* at one's own house is to give an object-lesson in immorality to the boys and the girls in the family, especially to the former. As long as *nautch* is fashionable among us and is freely indulged in, it is impossible that the morality of men should greatly improve, and our respect for women should increase." Wise words these that state the matter in a nutshell. With them, not inappropriately, may go Bishop Welldon's thoughtful suggestion that "the cause of morality in India would seem to make a definite

advance, if at the beginning of the new century the officials of government and the leaders of society were to make known their desire that *nautches* should not form part of any entertainment to which they......are invited."

Not many words can profitably be given to the question, 'what next?' when *nautches* are universally discouraged. It is not easy or safe to foretell the direction likely to be taken by the energies of a society passing through a great transition. To the strictly pure the simple consideration, "morals before art or pleasure" would be quite enough; but it is, perhaps, too much to expect the majority to be fully content with this. There must be a sense of want for a time, as the old order changeth into the new. Promiscuous musical entertainments, barren of result in other countries, will grow obsolete. What with natural unsuitability to India and what with social discouragement, dance will lapse as a relic of the past. Weaned from its present low associations, music must become a commoner and more respectable acquirement—a profession with some and an accomplishment with many; and all the genuine pleasure to be derived from that noble art may, after a generation or two, be fully regained. Indian music, rich in devotional and unfortunately pretty full in the amorous element, will have to be considerably improved on the purely social side. Social gatherings—not the current picture galleries, but cordial, convivial assemblies—will become frequenter and more useful and attractive, with the spread of education and of liberal ideas on "castes" and the "position of women." Clubs—not the present 'aftermaths' of professional work, but resorts of learned ease and friendly communion—will be more popular as interest and information about "general subjects" will grow. A dozen other methods of employing leisure in useful and innocent ways will gradually suggest themselves, when only there is a firm resolution "not to drink poison, if

nectar be not within easy reach."—As to the particular community concerned; when deprived of the prestige of music, its hope will be chiefly in two healthy changes:—(1) the allotment of temple-service (of course, wholly for sacred purposes) as the reward only of chastity—married life being no disqualification, and (2) the education and improvement of the male members of the community—now, mostly drones or parasites. No doubt, with many an unhappy woman the change will for a time be a "vision of Mirza" bridge, through which she will drop into the current below. But if the present wealth and influence of the community be wisely utilised, the meed of immorality may be happily changed into the price of salvation. A caste, chartered to a vicious life, will cease to be; and though some poor sheep may deplorably go astray, not a few of the daughters now deliberately prodigal will be restored to the longing bosom of the Divine Mother.

VI—CONCLUSION.

That 'born prince' among the educated sons of India—that noble soul, the news of whose translation to "holier heights" has just been received in such 'divine despair' by the whole nation—observed at the last Madras Social Conference that the best test of the principles of social reform is to picture them to the mind as "writ large" on the society and to realise what happy changes are thus made, and what abiding good is thus wrought. Judged according to this wise canon, purity in personal, domestic and social life justifies itself as the very key-stone of moral health and national greatness. "Trample on woman," says a distinguished friend of this cause, "and you trample on your own moral nature. Respect woman, care for her, work for her, give her knightly shelter and protection, and you shall find the loftier emotions gaining sway in your heart, and touching your life to finer issues." "Whether you be young or old, think, I pray you, of the holy names of

sister, (daughter) wife and mother; think of all the holy influences which stream forth upon an evil world from the relations which those sacred names represent, and resolve, one and all, that under no sky from which the sun shines down shall these names have a holier, tenderer meaning than in this fair land."

Nor need this stirring appeal come amiss to those with rich traditions and noble examples of purity in the past. The crowning feature of our national hero was that he never sent but one arrow and never loved but one woman—the *Kohinoor* of her kind. Our national type of truthfulness preferred gifting away an empire to plucking the rose from a maiden brow. Our national model of devotion made purity the basis of piety by finding a "mother" in every "stranger woman." The greatest of our epics tells man "to look upon his neighbour's wife as on her that gave him life." The oldest of our bridal hymns requires the couple being wedded to pray jointly "may all the gods that live above blend our hearts in love!" The highest ideal of chivalry in India made the 'knight' the *rakhiband-bhai*—the bracelet-wearing brother—of the 'lady.' An ancient Indian conception of the Deity is that of 'half-man and half-woman,' the harmoniser of the sexes. A hoary precept of purity in our literature exhorts every person to honour the body and to keep it pure, for it is the abode of the spirit. May the sanctity of that Indian sage abide in us, who, when a celestial nymph visited his hermitage, employed her wiles to disturb his penances, and immodestly laid bare some 'mysterious charms,' exclaimed in childlike innocence, "would that one could have a *mother* of this beauty!" The grace of the All-Holy be with us all!

APPENDIX.

[SPECIMEN PLEDGES.]

A. For Adults.

With the help of God, I pledge myself to keep the following covenant:—

1. I will not attend any gatherings where nautches are present, or invite them myself, or do anything else that tends to encourage them.

2. I will not use impure language, or tell coarse jests, or sing indecent songs, or indulge in listening to such language, songs or jests.

3. I will not indulge in witnessing indecent pictures, paintings, or scenes.

4. I will not converse or read, for the sake of impure pleasure, about subjects that are calculated to suggest impure thoughts, and will try my best not to entertain any such thoughts.

5. I will be chaste in body and will endeavour my best to be chaste in mind, as well as to promote the cause of purity in general.

B. For boys.

In order to preserve my own personal purity and to encourage it in others, as being one important feature of a sound character, I promise, with trust in God's help and guidance, to try my very best—

(1) To cultivate such habits as will help purity in thought, speech and action;

(2) To abstain, while showing obedience to the wishes of my father (or guardian), from such engagements as are likely to be harmful to personal purity; and

(3) To persuade my friends and school-mates to do likewise.

XI.—Widow Re-marriage.

BY RAO BAHADUR WAMANRAO MADHAV KOLHATKAR,

District and Sessions Judge, Saugor.

A study of the earlier part of the Greek and Roman histories leads one to the conclusion that like India other Aryan peoples too were once ruled by priests. India differs from Greece and Rome in the fact that here theocracy has maintained its ground to the present times, while there it was followed by the rule of heroes, aristocracy and democracy. The continuance of theocracy in India must be admitted on all hands to be the source of its strength as well as of its weakness, as will be apparent from the fact that the Hindus have to this day preserved their distinct nationality, while their brother nations survive only in history. The same turn of mind that has perpetuated evil customs in all their nudity has also protected the Hindu simplicity of manners in all its loveliness from the ruthless hand of time.

The grip of religion on popular mind is naturally very tight as compared with the hold that mundane institutions generally have. Religion, with its complicated apparatus of heaven, hell, purgatory, blessings, curses, holds out promises of eternal happiness as a reward for obedience to its laws and threatens perpetual condemnation for their violation. Any description of pleasure that may follow from a violation of its commands is limited in intensity as well as duration, while the penalty entailed is infinitely harder and more enduring.

In India, religion, not content with unlimited control over spiritual concerns, gradually wormed itself into the details of daily life, however trifling and however removed from the generally accepted idea of religion. In extending its dominion it insensibly increased in power. A departure, never so slight, from the rules of every day life as observed

by the Hindus came to be looked upon as a sacrilege and as a consequence, to entail the penalty of excommunication. None can lay any claim to the name of a Hindu unless he endorses every practice sanctioned by the priestly class. Either a person must be a Hindu all over, or he cannot be a Hindu at all.

The Vedas troubled themselves only about particular religious performances like sacrifices. The Smritis extended their conquests and brought purely temporal things like apprenticeship, marriage, succession, adoption and the criminal law within the pale of religion; and its example was imitated by the Purans in the work of extending the dominion of religion to regions which were not its legitimate objects. How far this extending process would have carried its operations had it been allowed to go its own way, it is idle to speculate. But it is amusing to note the fetters with which religion thought fit to bind the apparently trifling routine of life. The obsequious ceremonies that have to be performed before the dead are allowed to be burnt are an instance in point. A son must, after the death of his father, part with his mustachios, and the shaving business has to keep time with incantations uttered by a priest. The adjustment of the pile of wood that is to consume the dead is accompanied by appropriate incantations. Even acts to which no ingenuity can attach the semblance of religious siginficance have their own religious appurtenances. On cremation grounds as near marriage altars, on death-beds as on hymenal beds, in dinner parties as on fast days there is only one idea present to the mind of a Hindu, one idea alone runs through acts performed by him; and that all-engrossing idea is one of religion.

Fiction actively aids religion in its conquests. Comparatively recent works in order to claim the respect generally yielded to antiquity, are palmed off on the credulous reader as of as ancient dates as the

Vedas themselves. Even the Vedas are referred back to a fabulously old period. Mr. B. G. Tilak has, in a scholarly treatise on the antiquity of the Vedas, clearly shown that the greater part of the Vedas was written only abont 4,000 years ago. The Smritis, which on the very face of them appear to be much more recent are devoutly believed by all orthodox Hindus to be reminiscences of the Vedas. Works on mathematics which were evidently composed after the Greek invasion are credited with being emanations from Brahma. Even works of a couple of decades back are said to have been fathered on the famous Vyas with something like indecent haste. How far Vyas and others to whom these later works are imputed will like the several acts of filiation and what welcome the impostors will meet at their hands it is difficult to imagine. But it is beyond reasonable doubt that though in an age in which the mist of ages of superstition is being dispelled by the searching light of historical investigation they are not likely to find any credence, still they have done incalculable mischief by tightening the *fetters* with which superstitious India was *manacled.* The fact that great rulers like Shivaji who were in their time only great heroes have within the short period of a couple of centuries risen to the dignity of demigods illustrates the same credulous tendency. The result has been that antiquity which, in other countries, would be at best but extremely suspicious evidence, is in India conclusive proof of the desirability of a custom.

This process of extending the domain of religion, once understood, easily explains the subordinate position which has been assigned to Indian women. They were prevented by the physical irregularity of their lives from taking part in sacrificial performances which, in some not rare cases, extended over inconveniently long periods, and thus gradually lost the importance which they once enjoyed in

the times of Gargi and Atreyi, much as the warrior and merchant classes lost their occupations being inconsistent with an unimpeded participation in religious ceremonies. That these latter too once shared high privileges with the priestly class is borne out by the history of Viswamitra and by traces being found in the Vedas of a time when warriors could give lessons in religious matters to priests without scandalising them.

That a widow had the right of remarrying is placed beyond the shadow of a doubt by several Smritis which have been already explained with remarkable lucidity by Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Vishnu Shastri Pandit and Mr. Justice Ranade. The most important of them are the works of Manu, Narada and Parasara. Whatever legal force we may attach to the several texts, we cannot escape the conclusion to which they point—that the custom of widow marriage was once in vogue in India. The ancient Indian law on the subject was, if anything, more liberal in its provisions than the modern English law. Of course in the progress of time, as the extension of the range of religion began to contract on the liberty enjoyed by women, the above texts began to be tortured out of their natural significance by ingenious interpreters to fit in with a state of society that had of late come into being. This method being deemed of doubtful utility in cases of serious controversies, was later on given up in favour of the creation of new texts to be fathered on some ancient sage or other. This point in the history of the movement is represented by the Puranic period when the leaders of the Brahmanic community began to marshal their forces against the advocates of Buddha's religion which, from an insignificant sect, had been growing to gigantic proportions and which threatened at no distant date to swallow it up unless active steps were taken to represent the Brahmanic religion in tempting colours. To this period

the great Indian epics belong. Even in the Purans, however, traces of the custom of remarriage are found.

"The first on the list is the remarriage of Ulupi, the widowed daughter of a patriarch of the Naga tribe, who on the death of her first husband was given in marriage by her father to the famous Arjun, the hero of the Mahabharat story. Ulupi in so many distinct words, is described to have become one of Arjun's many wives, the son she bore to him is emphatically described to be his legitimate-born son, and not one of the inferior sorts of sons. The entire narrative in the Mahabharat, and still more emphatically Jaimini's continuation corroborates this assertion.

"The second illustration is from the story of Nala and Damayanti. The latter princess, after having been abandoned by her husband in the forest, found her way after much suffering to her father's house. While there, she bided in hope for some time, but could get no news of her absent lord. Thereupon, with the consent of her mother she contrived a plan for finding out her long-lost Nala. She secured the services of a learned Brahman to advertise to all the neighbouring princes that she was going to have a second Swayamvara aad make a second choice of a husband for herself in consequence of the disappearance and probable death of Nala, her first husband. This Brahman carried his message to the Court of the King of Ayodhya, with whom Nala had sought shelter in the disguise of an obscure charioteer. The king of Ayodhya, on hearing this news prepared to go to the Swayamvara and Nala drove the chariot for him with extraordinary speed, the secret of which was known to him only. This display of skill and certain other circumstances led to his subsequent recognition, whereupon all idea of the second marriage was given up. This story has its importance, for it shows the received opinion among the people of the day, to whom such an invitation did not appear in any heinous light, did not appear

more extraordinary than the invitation to the first marriage. That a woman like Damayanti, so renowned for her devotion to her husband, should with the consent of her parents, try to discover the whereabouts of her lost husband by this stratagem, at once shows that remarriage did not strike people in those times as an abomination, but as an ordinary commonplace thing.

"The third illustration is from Padma Purana, the story of the unfortunate daughter of the King of Benares who was married no less than twenty times, it being her peculiar misfortune that as soon as the marriage rites were all performed, the husband so married died, but though this happened over and over again, the father, with the consent of the sage Brahmans of his Court, solemnly gave her in marriage as often as she became a widow. The emphatic words used in the text preclude the supposition contended for by some disputants, that the several husbands were removed by death before, and not after the binding marriage rites had been celebrated."*

Soon after this followed the celebrated expulsion of the Buddhists from India. One of the impressions that the Buddha's religion left back was the further curtailments of the liberty of women. To this period is relegated the birth of the odious custom of disfigurement of widows in imitation of a similar custom of the Buddhistic ascetics. Once it obtained a vogue, marriage of widows was rendered practically impossible.

Along with the introduction of enforced widowhood there was springing up a hateful custom, *i.e.*, that of infant marriage, which was in the end to prove its worst enemy. The two customs thus brought together by a mere accident were diametrically opposed to each other. An infant widow is a pitiful result of their combined action, and in her turn, is wreaking a just vengeance

* Quoted from Mr. Ranade's Essay.

on them by representing the evil consequences of each in their exaggerated form. A widowed infant has been the first to attract the sympathies of an advocate of late marriages as she has been the first to enlist the sympathies of all pioneers of widow marriage. This young and at the same time widowed creature is a favorite both with the reformers and the anti-reformers, and paradoxical though it may appear, nothing would please both the parties so much as a complete annihilation of her.

The reasons why, after being established as a sacred custom enjoying the privileges attending the idea of its sacerdotal birth, enforced widowhood continued in full swing for a period of nearly two thousand years are not far to seek. Religious institutions are, as a rule, not so fragile of frame as other institutions. Systems based on temporal grounds can be discontinued at pleasure when no justification remains for their continuance. Obedience to Government legislation can be enforced only so long as obvious blessings flow from it. It is true, as observed by an acute thinker, that a change in law never anticipates a change in popular sentiment. But it is equally true that it is never long in following it. The code of Manu, on the other hand, has been the law of the Hindus for a period of nearly two thousand years, and a construction of its texts inconsistent with their obvious meaning is to this day scarcely admitted except by a side wind. The rigidity of Hindu sacred law thus made a disturbance in the Hindu social structure every corner of which breathed of nothing but religion, possible only by revolution. The minister and judges of Hindu kings were themselves priests, men of high principles and rigid morality and well versed in ancient lore if you please but incompetent for that very reason to the task of introducing a beneficial reform, where necessary, and incapabe of understanding that widows in the full bloom of their youth could be in any need of a second marriage. A revolution

in the religious ideas of the nation was a condition precedent to the introduction of salutary reforms. But such a revolution was by no means desirable or possible. It was impossible because, during the process of development from the rude material of universal pantheism to the highly subtle doctrine of absolute idealism, the Hindu religion had gathered on its way doctrines of a miscellaneous sort and restrained them with a firm grasp. It was not possible for any foreign religion, in competition with the indigenous product of India to present an exterior subtle enough to mystify, tempting enough to win, imposing enough to awe or gross enough to strike. The Hindu religion was itself calculated to humble the king in his palace, solace the peasant in his hovel, and satisfy the philosopher in his study.

The tendency of the Maya doctrine which came into fashion after the expulsion of the Buddhists was to confirm leaders of the Hindu community in their indifference towards women, especially towards widows, by making the world, widows included, an unreal one. This philosophical school maintained a stoic indifference of feeling to its disciples and cut the Gordion knot of the origin of evil by imputing unreality to worldly pleasures as well as worldly pains. The doctrine of fatalism too, which had obtained a vogue among the Hindus tended to benumb their feelings and introduce among them a reckless indifference by teaching that all misery was inevitable. Though the subject of free will and necessity is doomed to remain a vexed question to the end of time, it is as plain as daylight that the prevalence of the doctrine of fatalism has introduced an unhealthy tone of thinking among those who hold it.

Foreign travel which always creates a respect for foreign customs through a sympathetic observation of them and thus acts as a check on the tendency of the customs of a country to stagnate, was not open to Hindus. The

priests were wise enough to anticipate the innovations that would follow in the train of foreign travel, and accordingly forbade it on pain of doing penance.

Mahomedan conquest, instead of familiarising the natives with foreign customs, only contributed materially to prejudice them against their conquerors. After it, the natives were solely occupied by the thought of their political regeneration and indefinitely postponed their social progress. Even had the conquerors been more sympathetic in their treatment, it is more than doubtful if they would have impressed the conquered with a favourable opinion of their customs, as the latter were greatly their superiors in social matters. Indeed, it is suspected by some writer that many evil customs among the Hindus like the system of *Parda* and early marriage owe their origin to Mahomedans. It was reserved for English conquerors alone to present a set of manners at once foreign and civilized.

The pit of ignorance into which women fell after their degradation is also one of the potent reasons why their male partners who strove to rise superior to the existing state of society were often held in check in their upward march. This was as it should be. This is the fate of every nation in which one class, after obtaining the mastery over another equally numerous class, tries to crush it to the dust. The grim reality of this proposition has been alas! too often proved in the history of widow marriage. The famous Rajput prince, Jayasinha II of Jaipur attempted to introduce widow marriage in his kingdom, and his efforts would have been crowned with success but for his own widowed mother who mockingly insisted on her own marriage taking place before that of any of her widowed subjects. Strange phenomenon! A widow actively interfering with the liberation of her own class! The story of the celebrated Maratha chief, Parashuram Bhau's daughter illustrates the same truth. "He had a young daughter

and Durgabai, we believe, was her name. She was given in marriage at a very tender age, varying in different accounts from five to nine years old, to a section of the Joshi family. The young bridegroom died of small-pox fever, while yet the marriage festivities were not over. The brave old father was so moved by this calamitous termination of his fond hopes to see his daughter blessed, that he wrote to the Peishwa at Poona, tendering his resignation of his command of the army, and expressing a determination to retire from the world. The Peishwa's durbar, who knew the value of the man, and felt with him in his sufferings, assured him that he need not despair, for they would try to find a remedy for his irremediable sorrow. The Shankaracharya of the time was then referred to, and his kind offices were prayed for by the men in power. The old man had some grudge against the Bhau, and he answered that he would have nothing to advise in the way of giving comfort to a man who was worse than a *yavan.* The Peishwa's durbar, therefore, wrote to the Benares Pandits, the Pandits of the Poona Court having shown a perverse disposition. These Benares Pandits sent a letter of assent signed by many hundred persons, in which, moved by the extreme infancy of the bride, and also by the consideration that the cause of Brahman supremacy would be greatly checked by the withdrawal of Bhau from public affairs, they found out that the Shastras favoured the remarriage of girls like Durgabai, widowed in infancy. On receipt of this letter of the Benares Pandits, the Shankaracharya of the day thought it wise to yield, and the Poona Pandits were about to follow suit, for none dared to hint a threat against the lion of the Deccan, as he was called. The astute Pandits, however, waited on Parshuram Pant Bhau's wife, and through her they gained their object. The mother expressed her readiness to bear with her daughter's bereavement, rather than see a new innovation introduced. Parsharam

Pant Bhau was much surprised at this resolution and yielded the point to the Pandits, declaring that he insisted upon it solely with a view to console his wife, and if she wished for no consolation, he had nothing more to say." *

In Bengal the widow marriage movement was inaugurated by the late venerable Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar who may be termed the great apostle of the cause.

In an able work on remarriage which he wrote in 1854, not content with proving its desirability on grounds of justice and convenience, he maintained that it was not prohibited by the Vidas, but that on the contrary it was positively countenanced by them. He went on to show that those texts in the Smiritis which militated against the Vedic texts must yield the preference to them as being more recent in date. This book was written in Bengali, and therefore was intelligible to all. His principal opponent, the then best grammarian in Bengal wrote his rejoinders in Sanskrit in accordance with the tradition of Sanskrit scholars, which were therefore quite Greek and Latin to the masses. Later on Pundit Ishwar Chandra translated his work into English with a view to create in terest in the subject in his English readers.

Once mooted, this question soon attracted public attention and rapidly grew in importance. Several meetings were held to discuss the subject in all its bearings. Many scholars from Bengal expressed views contrary to those held by the Pandit. Government consulted the Pandits of Benares on this point and they returned a verdict in favour of remarriage. The agitation led at last to the passing of Act XV of 1856 which legitimatised the issue of remarried widows.

After removing the legal bar to the legitimacy of the offspring of remarried couples, the Pandit next turned his attention to giving the subject a practical turn.

* Quoted from Mr. Ranade's Essay.

"The first widow marriage celebrated by him took place in Calcutta on the 7th December 1865. This created a great sensation in the Hindu community. He was ex-communicated himself, and the same penalty was threatened upon all who joined him. Although he was deserted by his friends and countrymen, he firmly adhered to his plans. He succeeded in causing a number of widow marriages to be solemnized. He became heavily involved in debt on account of the expenses connected with them, but refused to accept any pecuniary assistance from others. He chose a widow as the bride of his son." *

Tracing back the time when the attention of the Mahratta Brahmans was first directed to this subject after the British conquest, we come to a pamphlet on remarriage written in 1837. It was the fruit of the joint authorship of a Telugu Brahman and a resident of Ratnagiri. It was published in Bombay and many favourable and adverse criticisms appeared in the *Mumbai Darpan*, a weekly paper of that time. On this another book was written, but it was not printed, though copies of it were privately circulated among Shastris. The language of the book leads one to conclude that it was written by an old Sashtri. The name of the author is not given. It appears to have been sent by the author to a wealthy and influential friend who, in his turn, published it. This book refers, among other things, to the stories of Parshuram Bhau's widowed daughter, and thus confirms the facts which Mr. Ranade gathered from an independent source. The Rev. Baba Padmanji also wrote two works on remarriage—"the Kutumba Sudharana," and "the Yamunaparyatana."

Thus in the Deccan books on the subject appeared even prior to Pandit Ishwar Chandra's work. But this reform was far from being instantly carried into practice. The remarriages that were celebrated after this wordy war-

* Quoted from "Noted Indians."

fare and before the movement was taken up by Vishnu Sashtri were few and far between. Raghunath Janardan, a Gaud Brahmin by caste and a clerk in the municipal office at Ahmedabad married a widow, Chimabai by name, at Poona about the year 1853. The bridegroom had his first wife living at the time of the remarriage, and consequently his remarriage was not hailed by the reformers with anything like enthusiasm. The second remarriage took place thirteen years after the first. The bride was a Gujrathi lady named Diwali Bai. The very next year, Narayen Jagannath Bhide, a Mahratta Brahman and an ancient pleader at Poona, married his wife's widowed sister at Bandra near Bombay. All these remarriages were celebrated privately and were not fruitful as in Bengal of any practical consequences. This may be accounted for partly by the fact that education of the masses in the Deccan had commenced later than in Bengal.

The Widow Marriage Association was started at Bombay in the year 1866. Many educated natives enlisted themselves as its members. It had for its Chairman H. H. the Chief of Jamkhind and for its Vice-Chairman H. H. Raghunath Rao of Vinchur, Vishnu Shastri Pandit acted as Secretary, Bal Mangesh Wagle, K. T. Telang, M. G. Ranade, Janardan Sakharam Gadgil, Gopal Rao Hari Deshmukh, Balaji Pandurang, Shantaram Narayana, N. M. Parmanand, B. H. Bhagvat, A. V. Kathavate were some of its members. In antagonism to this association the orthodox party set up an association, the Hindu Dharma Vyavasthapaka Mandali, with the active co-operation of Vithoba Anna Daftardar and Nilkanth Rao Joshi. It held its meetings at Thakor Dwar. The wordy strife of these associations lasted for three years.

The widow marriage movement had need of a champion like Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar who should combine in his person sound scholarship, an intellect capable of under-

standing and harmonising the several discordant texts in the Smritis, an eloquence powerful enough to move the masses and an honesty of purpose which never shrank from consequences, in short, one who should possess both the head to plan and the hand to execute. This champion the reform party found at last in the celebrated Vishnu Sashtri Pandit. As for many days the cause of widow marriage was all but identified with his name, it would not be amiss to give a brief account of his life and doings. Curiously enough, the broad facts of his life coincide with those of Pandit Ishwar Chandra. After being educated according to the old system, he learnt English in the Government School at Poona. When he left school, he entered Government service, but was soon obliged to throw it up. He then became the Editor of the *Indu Prakash*, an Indian paper. He had an intimate knowledge of Sanskrit, English and Marathi. The widow marriage movement appears to have early attracted his notice. He translated Pandit Ishwar Chandra's work on the subject into Marathi, and tried to sow the seed of reform broadcast by writing able essays in his paper. This did not fail to elicit adverse criticism from his opponents, who were old Shastris well versed in Sanskrit lore. To carry the discussion to successful termination Vishnu Shastri had need of all his resources. He was equal to the occasion. He had to read a variety of Sanskrit works in order to face his opponents. Questions about the *Gotra* of the re-married widow, the person who was to give her away in marriage, and about inheritance were readily put to him by his opponents or by interested lookers-on and were as readily answered by him in his eloquent and convincing manner. Moreover he was not sparing in using his elocutionary powers for the cause. He was justly reputed to be one of the best, if not the best, orator of his time. The subject lent an additional charm to his

eloquence. He lost no opportunity of delivering lectures and thus making the subject popular in provincial towns, though a variety of business detained him in Bombay oftener than he wished. He made several speeches at Nasik which was then, as it still is, a city of scholars and priests. Lectures were followed by disputes. Placards signed by Vishnu Shastri and inviting discussion were to be seen in all the principal streets of large towns. The defiant challenge was accepted by the celebrated Vithoba Anna Daftardar who was at once a great scholar and great poet. He came to Poona in 1868 and expressed his desire that the controversy should take place in that city. Vishnu Shastri assented to the proposal, and came to Poona with his friends. But the controversy, did not come off as expected. While the terms on which the controversy was to take place were being settled to the satisfaction of both parties, Vithoba Anna commenced a series of lectures against remarriage in the Pachhapurkar's wada, Budhwar. Vishnu Shastri was not invited to the meetings that were held there. Seeing the opposite party busy with arousing popular opinion in their favour, he commenced a similar series of lectures at Sonia Bapu Mande's house in the Narayen Peth. He refuted in his lectures those very arguments which had been advanced by the Daftardar in his lectures, and summaries of which were being published as soon as they were delivered. The novelty of the subject and his claims on popular sympathy raised public excitement to the highest pitch. A little incident may serve as well as another to show what absorbing interest the subject had created. On the first day of Vishnu Shastri's series of lectures, the audience was not large owing to no previous intimation having been given to the public. But on the very next day the crowd literally crammed the place of meeting. [illegible] meeting was accordingly adjourned (?) from the princ[illegible] the courtyard. The yard was not in

proper order, and the servants were bid to sweep it clean and to spread carpets. An eminent friend of Vishnu Shastri who had accompanied him from Bombay, impatient of delay, commenced the sweeping operation himself. Bandu Nana Ranade, who was himself no mean scholar and who was present on the occasion, expressed his satisfaction with the masterly way in which Vishnu Shastri handled his subject, with his erudition and with the lucidity with which he made his meaning plain.

So far everything went on very well. But the really arduous task still remained to be accomplished—that of breaking through the barriers of custom. The reform party had had more than enough of disputes and were tired of them. A hero was required who would break the ice by marrying a widow and face the opprobrium that always attaches to innovation, in a word, who would transfer the question from speculation to reality. There were not many persons among the foremost reformers who were unfortunately for themselves widowers (adult bachelors were out of question) and fortunately for the cause brave souls. In India bravery in social matters means more than it does in more liberal countries. Religion being the basis of all Hindu customs, and it being naturally conservative in its tendency, every innovation, however trifling, comes to be looked upon as something opposed to religion, and therefore to be discouraged by every means. Poverty of reformers in particular cases lends a peculiar bitterness to the hardship of social ostracism which more resembles Robinson Crusœ's solitary life in the desert island than the isolation of reformers like Wilberforce and Bradlaugh, who differing in a single point, retained in their personality sufficiently numerous points of resemblance to those among whom they moved, to be but little affected by a difference of opinion. The absorption of individual life in religion makes it indispensable to yield a wholesale allegiance to it

or to eschew it altogether. An Englishman in a similar predicament would seek to forget his misery in the excitement of foreign travel. But an excessive love of country and lack of adventure have made foreign travel a forbidden fruit to the Hindus. What are the pangs of the black hole compared to these? Let not, therefore, those of us who are more conservative gloat over the weakness of those reformers who failed in the necessary amount of courage to carry out their principles into practice and thus to run the gauntlet of popular disfavour and of whose weakness such merciless gloating would be the best justification, if any were wanted. Moral weakness is the heritage common to all Hindus, and nobody has the right to laugh at another's weakness unless he himself has shown signal courage in identical circumstances. We must make allowance for weakness which is constitutional with us all.

The much needed man of courage was not long in making his appearance. Two brothers, Waman Rao and Narayan Rao Paranjpe, who belonged to the reform party had a young widowed sister, Venu Bai whom they wished to see remarried, and were in search of a suitable match. They had the full sympathy and co-operation of their sister. They made their intentions known to the remarriage association who advertised in the *Indu Prakash* paper for a man willing to marry a widow. The advertisement elicited a response from one Pandurang Vinayek Karmarkar, a teacher in the Vernacular school at Saoda in the Khandesh District who signified his willingness to risk a marriage with the widowed girl. The association had him examined as to his *bona fides* and fitness and then gave its sanction to the remarriage. The bridegroom took a few days' leave and went to Bombay. The celebration was to be public, and measures were taken accordingly. The day and place of the marriage were, fixed and invitation cards were sent over the signatures of the following gentlemen:—

1. Vishnu Parsharam Pandit.
2. Gopal Hari Deshmukh.
3. M. G. Ranade.
4. Vishnu Moreshwar Bhide.
5. Vishnu Parsharam Ranade.
6. Shri Krishna Shastri Talekar.
7. Janardan Sakharam Gadgil.

The marriage was to take place at the house of Rao Bahadoor Moroba Kantoba near the Gowalia tank. The host, a Pathare Prabhu, was a staunch adherent of the reform party and followed up this proof of his devotion to the cause by soon afterwards himself marrying a widow of his own caste. He had his house specially decorated for the occasion. The anti-reform party was naturally vexed to see the efforts of their opponents on the verge of being crowned with success. They left no stone unturned to prevent the remarriage. Anonymous letters were sent to Vishnu Shastri, and open threats of setting the *Indu Prakash* Press building on fire uttered in his presence. Plans were laid to waylay and attack the bridegroom on his way to the marriage-hall. But Vishnu Shastri was not a person to mind such threats. Steps were taken to have recognisances for keeping public peace executed by those using the threats. Vishnu Shastri received succour at this juncture from an unexpected quarter. The master of a gymnastic school who took great interest in the progress of reform, hearing of the threats directed against Vishnu Shastri, sent a defiant warning to the leaders of the lawless of the adverse party that they would do well to desist from their efforts to prevent the remarriage taking place. Finding all their attempts at prevention baffled, the leaders of the anti-reform party proposed, a couple of days before the day fixed for the marriage, that a controversy should first take place, and only in the event of a majority voting in favour of its legality and not otherwise, should the re-

marriage be solemnised. The orthodox party evidently hoped by this means to gain time. The reformers were not deceived by this appearance of anxiety on the part of their opponents to refer the matter to arbitration. They kept to their original resolution of celebrating the remarriage on the day fixed and took additional measures in anticipation of a riot taking place. Thus the first public celebration of a remarriage took place on the evening of 15th June 1869, without anything happening to mar the joy of the occasion. Many European and native gentlemen of distinction were present. Vishnu Shastri himself, assisted by some priests conducted the marriage ceremonies. The marriage presents amounted to Rs. 3,000 which was deposited in the Bank of Bombay in the name of the bride. The marriage feast too was attended by a number of Hindus from different places.

Seeing all their intentions frustrated one by one, the infuriated opponents had recourse to excommunication. But at the very outset, a dilemma presented itself. A wholesale excommunication of persons who had attended the marriage ceremonies or the marriage feast without distinction would be too vague and would lose its strength by reason of the number of those included in it, while one confined in its operation to the leading offenders would be too limited for the rage of the orthodox party which knew no bounds. At length after due deliberation, the latter course was adopted; and accordingly the seven signatories, the bridegroom, the bride and her brothers were excommunicated. The meeting held at Thakor Dwar by which the resolution of excommunication was adopted was a disorderly are—a fact which before long occasioned a dispute as to what was the precise wording of the resolution passed by the meeting. Before the question was satisfactorily decided circular letters were sent by the leaders of the orthodox party to different towns notifying the fact of

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excommunication. On this, four gentlemen, Bhaskar Shastri Tambankar, Sakharam Shastri Kale, Mahadeo Chemnaji Apte and Anna Moreshwer Kunte, issued a circular letter stating that no resolution had been unanimously come to by the meeting at Thakor Dwar. These four gentlemen were forthwith summarily excommunicated.

Some partisans of the reform party who had attended the meeting at Thakor Dwar took for perusal a list from a partisan of the anti-reform party. This resulted in a dispute, and the dispute in a prosecution of Vishnu Parshram Ranade, Bal Mangesh Wagle, and N. M. Parmanand which was, however, dismissed for want of sufficient evidence.

Soon after this, letters appeared in several papers with recommendations that the public should not respect the decree of excommunication, seeing that remarriage had not been proved to be invalid according to Hindu law by the orthodox party. These were signed by young educated gentlemen mostly from Poona. Their number at length went up to one hundred and seventy-two. The rapid increase in the number began to cause uneasiness to the anti-reform party and to force on them the necessity of a final settlement of the question by arbitration. They accordingly applied to the Shankaracharya of Karver and Sankeshwar. The Shankaracharya acceded to the request and went to Poona in the March of 1870. The Shankaracharya is said to have secretly signified to the reformers his readiness to give his sanction to the remarriage of infant widows provided that they, in their turn, withdrew the claims of adult widows to the same indulgence. The reformers took stock of the strength of their position and declined to come to the compromise proposed, especially as they thought that permission to remain was more in request with adult than with infant widows. On this a formal challenge was sent to the reform party and accepted by them. The news of the coming controversy spread like

wild fire throughout the length and breadth of the Mahratta country, and old Shastris flocked to Poona from different places, some on invitation from the Shankaracharya to assist in the debate, others from pure curiosity to witness the momentous controversy. At the very outset, the questions what should be the terms of the debate and with whom the final word should rest, stared in the face. The Shankaracharya, admittedly opposed as he was to the remarriage movement, was a sorry judge of the justice of the cause. The reformers proposed on their side that both the parties should publish their several cases and people should be left to judge of them of their own free will. But the proposal was rejected by the Shankaracharya who sought to substitute his own in lieu of the popular decision. The reformers had at last to close with the proposal of the Shankaracharya. Then followed the nomination of arbitrators and the umpire. Five arbitrators appeared on each side and an umpire was appointed who was to act only in the event of there being an equality of votes. The Shankaracharya gave his word that none who should register his vote on the reformers' side should incur his displeasure, and, in a letter, assured the adverse party of his intention to act disinterestedly in the matter, and to do nothing beyond announcing what would clearly appear to be the decision of the majority. The famous debate took place in Dixit's house at Poona. Vishnu Shastri Pandit, assisted by M. G. Ranade led the reformer's side of the controversy; while Narayanacharya Gajendragadkar, assisted by Vithoba Anna Daftardar led the other side. The names of the arbitrators and the umpire are given below.

On the side which maintained the legality of widow marriage.	On the other side.
1. Krishna Shastri Chiplonkar.	1. Bhiku Shastri Godbole.
2. Raoji Shastri Agashe.	2. Dinkar Shastri Khambele.

3. Raghunath Shastri Shende. 3. Appa Shastri Khaldikar.
4. Kesheo Shastri Gadgil. 4. Bhikacharya Ainapure.
5. Vyankat Shastri Mate. 5. Ganesh Shastri Kohatkar.
Umpire—Gopalacharya Karhadkar.

To avoid uncertainty and confusion, questions and answers were written, signed respectively by querists and respondents. In the course of the debate, Dinkar Shastri Khambete, one of the arbitrators nominated by the orthodox party, openly declared that victory over the reform party was his sole aim, and not the investigation of truth. Vishnu Shastri drew the attention of the Shankaracharya to this flagrant proof of partiality, but he was allowed to remain.

The debate commenced its sittings on the 28th March 1870, and lasted for nine days. The reformers intended to bring forward more proofs in favour of the legality of remarriage. But the Shankaracharya, declaring himself to be satisfied with the number of arguments on either side, arrested the further progress of the debate, and bade the several arbitrators submit their votes. The reformers offered no objection to this informal procedure. The arbitrators gave their votes as desired. Those on the negative side together with one of those on the affirmative side declared against the validity of remarriage. So the affirmative side was defeated by a majority of two.

The reformers were fairly puzzled at the result, and with all the greater reason as the arbitrators on their side, Vyankat Shastri, who had at the last moment left them in the lurch and proved a traitor to their cause, was the very person who had supplied them with an argument in favour of remarriage, *viz.*, that "the central period of Kali age, which is the Yuga proper and to which alone the prohibitions against remarriage and other institutions can apply, has not yet commenced and in fact will commence only after some 31,000 years from this date." His conduct pointed

to some secret influence clandestinely brought to bear upon him. So far from refuting his own argument in the opinion he had submitted, he had not so much as referred to it. Vishnu Shastri determined to get the matter cleared before accepting the Shankaracharya's verdict as final; and so he sent word to Vyankat Shastri with his friend Siddheshwar Shastri that he desired to see him personally. Next morning Vyankat Shastri called on Vishnu Shastri as desired. There were present also Vishnu Parashram Ranade, Kesheo Pandurang Godbole and Narayan Bapuji Gore. On being asked to explain his conduct, Vyankat Shastri stated that he still clung to his first opinion, but that the Shastris of the adverse party and the Shankaracharya himself had brought their pressure to bear upon him saying that a lie in the service of religion is excusable and citing the case of Dharma, and that he, poor soul! had no alternative but to submit and take an oath that he would vote against remarriage. This confession astounded the persons assembled there: and one of them, Narayen Bapuji Gore published the account over his signature in the *Dnyan Prakash*, (number of 14th April 1870.) The orthodox party hastened to throw discredit on the account by an expedient as ingenious and as little to their credit as the one they had already employed. Directly the account appeared, they took the simple Vyankat Shastri before the Shankaracharya and induced him to sign a document purporting to deny the fact of his having seen and spoken to Vishnu Shastri as alleged by Gore. This took place on the 15th of April 1870. The very next day, the contents of the document were published in a proclamation in which the Editor of the *Dnyan Prakash* paper was openly charged with dishonesty. Soon after, in a meeting held on the 7th April to announce the decision arrived at, Ganesh Bapuji Malvankar, who was an eloquent speaker and who had been charged with the duty of making the announce-

ment, seized the opportunity to read the paper signed by Vyankat Shastri and the proclamation issued and to give vent to his pent up rage against the editors of the *Dnyan Prakash* and the *Indu Prakash* and Narayen Bapuji Gore in a declamation in which he denied the last named gentleman whom he accused of black deeds any title to his own surname which, in Marathi means "white." Mr. Gore, keenly conscious of the injustice of the defamatory epithets hurled at his head, lodged a complaint against Mr. Malvankar in the Court of Mr. Fraser, Railway Magistrate. Those who had been present on the occasion of Vyankat Shastri's confession and others who had attended the meeting in which the defamatory language was used were examined as witnesses for the prosecution. Evidence of *alibi* was adduced for defence, but it could not stand the test of cross-examination and was disbelieved by the Court. Mr. Malvankar was convicted of defamation and sentenced to simple imprisonment for a term of thirty-two days. Dr. Fraser's judgment appeared in the supplement to the *Indu Prakash* number of the 16th May. On appeal, the District Magistrate maintained the conviction but reduced the sentence to one of a fine of Rs. 100. The order of the District Magistrate was confirmed on appeal by the High Court.

After the conclusion of the trial, fresh trials were instituted of those who had given false evidence in the preceding trial, and, among others, of Malvankar, who was, after a preliminary inquiry, committed to the Court of Session, and was sentenced to three months' rigorous imprisonment. He was also prosecuted by the editors of the *Dnyan Prakash* and the *Indu Prakash* for defamation, both of whom withdrew their complaints, the former on the tender of apology by the accused, and the latter on the conviction of the accused in the perjury case. In the course of the defamation trials, Vyankat Shastri deposed on oath that he himself had communicated to Vishnu Shastri the line of

argument relating to Kaliyuga and that he had discovered nothing to change his opinion.

The Remarriage Association passed a resolution that the validity of remarriage was as good as recognized by the majority of the arbitrators seeing that Dinkar Shastri's opinion was not worthy of being taken into account as he was retained on the board of arbitrators under protest and that Vyankat Shastri's real opinion was in favour of remarriage. This resolution is in accordance with the rules of judicial practice that obtain in Indian Courts, and for the matter of that, in the courts of all civilized countries.

Martyrdom always triumphs over success, though it is displayed in a bad cause. Sympathy follows in the wake of misfortune, though it be the result of a mistake on the part of the persecuted. The prosecutions instituted by the reformers against their adversaries turned the tide of public opinion against them for a time, and blinded the masses to the unfair means employed against them. Popular prejudice gathered strength from the fact of Gopal Hari Deshmukh, one of the excommunicated seven gentlemen going through the प्रायश्चित्त (Prayaschit) ceremony at Ahmedabad on the 22nd May 1870 for the sake of his daughter whose mother-in-law thaeatened to get her son remarried in case her father remained excommunicated. A mistaken idea began to spread among the masses that Mr. Deshmukh had done penance through a change in his opinion. In a letter, Mr. Deshmukh communicated the real cause of his doing penance to Vishnu Sashtri who thereupon published part of it in the *Indu Prakash* (number of the 20th May). In it Mr. Deshmukh had promised active and entire sympathy with the doings of the reformers. This act of penance without repentance perfectly satisfied his daughter's mother-in law.

The uneasiness, however, arising from such persecution was more than counterbalanced by the sympathy of friends. Those whom the arguments of the reformers and

the dishonesty of their adversaries had won over to their side, were not slow to proclaim their conversion. A letter of sympathy appeared in the *Indu Prakash* (number of the 27th June) over fifty-one signatures which soon went up to over two hundred and fifty. Scarcely had the late warmth of the hot contest had time to cool when another remarriage took place on the 6th of June in the hall of the Gokul Das Tejpal Sanskrit Institute. This event, taking place as it did so soon after the late tragedy, stilled all fears that were lingering on the score of want of following. A couple of years after, Vishnu Shastri himself, though on the shady side of forty-five, proved the honesty of his convictions by espousing a widow.

The Gujrathis, who were so far silent spectators of the tragedy being enacted at Poona, began active agitation soon after the Poona agitation had gone beyond its incipient stage. A Remarriage Association was started at Ahmedabad for the purpose of helping remarriages. Shet Madhavdas Raghunathdas, of the Kapol Bania caste, married a young widow of a rich and high family of his own caste, and has been since doing good to the cause. He has christened his new building in Girgaum the Widow Marriage Hall and has placed it at the service of the cause of widow marriage. It has justified its name by the number of happy remarriages it has silently witnessed for more than ten years.

Three or four years ago, Mr. D. B. Jaywant, an educated and courageous youth of the Kayastha Prabhu class set an example to his fellow-castemen by marrying a widow of the same caste. He and his elder brother who went though the ordeal with great courage and equanimity, deserve every praise. More remarriages have since taken place in the same caste.

In 1884 the subject of remarriage acquirred a fresh importance through the writings of Mr. Malabari, one of those

Parsi gentlemen who have been doing yeomen's service to the country of their adoption in social, political and industrial matters, and who have thus been more than discharging the debt of gratitude they owe to it. Being a non-Hindu, and consequently not in a position to speak with authority and to be heard with unbiassed minds, in constant danger of having his disinterestedness construed into meddlesomeness, his laudable efforts were far less successful than those of a Hindu of equal courage, sincerity, ability and knowledge would have been. After years of untiring labour he handed over his self-imposed and thankless task to Dewan Bahadoor R. Raghunath Rao as likely to prosper in orthodox hands. That his confidence was not misplaced has been amply proved by his worthy successor. Madras was rather late in the field, but it has more than made amends for its early indifference by its sustained enthusiasm for the cause of remarriage, thanks mainly to the indefatigable and zealous labours of Rao Bahadur K. Viresalingam Pantulu, than whom a more ardent worker in the cause of Social Reform does not breathe in the whole country and who is justly known as the Pandit Vidyasagar of Southern India. The Punjab is still in a backward condition, and no wonder. Education has been there neglected to a degree which renders freedom of thought well nigh impossible.

We must not ignore the influence of literature on widow marriage. The *Sudharak*, a paper started by the late lamented G. G, Agarkar and the *Indian Social Reformer* have been the leading organs of the reformers in the Deccan and Madras respectively and been doing immense service to the cause of widow marriage. The widow homes of Shashipada Banerji and D. K. Karve have also had their share in the furtherance of the movement. Of late several pamphlets and plays have been written in favour of widow marriage and have been growing in popularity.

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A statistical study of remarriages celebrated hitherto in the Maratha country leads to some curious conclusions. The largest number of bridegrooms is from the Kokanastha Brahman class, and the largest number of brides from the Deshasthas. The ratio of Kokanastha bridegrooms to Kokanastha brides may be said very nearly to vary inversely as that of Deshastha bridegrooms to Deshastha brides. The number of remarriages among the Karhadas and the Deorakhes is too small to draw any conclusion. Out of 21 marriages, in 8 the bridegrooms earned not more than Rs. 25 per month, in 2 they earned more than 25 but not more than 50; in 4 they earned more than 50 but not more than 75, and in 2 more than 75 and not more than 100. This falsifies the assertion often confidently made that most bridegrooms in remarriages are highly paid Government officials. Among the Mahrattas, Brahmans appear to have taken the most prominent part, while among the Gujrathis the Banias have been the principal actors, and the Brahmans have been thrown in the background. The ages of the majority of Mahratta brides vary from 15 to 20, and those of the majority of Gujrathi brides from 20 to 25; while the age of an average Mahratta bridegroom varies from 30 to 35, and that of his Gujrathi brother from 25 to 30. The inequality arises from the fact that even in ordinary marriages among the Gujrathis the ages of the bride and the bridegroom are allowed to gravitate more towards each other than in ordinary Mahratta marriages.

The annual increase in remarriages is greater in Berar and the Central Provinces than in the Deccan proper. The reasons are obvious. Those who have migrated to those provinces observe a great difference between their own manners and those of the inhabitants of the provinces, and being thus impressed with the immateriality of differences in social customs find it easier to advance than those whom they have left behind.

Moreover, neither their old bonds nor their new connections are so strong as to materially affect their conduct in social matters. The annually growing number of re-marriages in these provinces is also no unsure index to the sentiments of the Deccanites proper which are every year being more and more alienated from the old religion, and, though held in check by their surroundings for a time, wait only a transplantation to express themselves in action. Even in Poona, the seat of orthodoxy, old people who have witnessed the ravages of the terrible plague on thousands of Brahman families are heard openly to deplore the absence of the custom of remarriages. God grant that we learn to reform ourselves without the aid of misfortunes.

It has been observed by an acute Maratha thinker that the cause of reform was not a little compromised by the social reformers themselves posing as religious reformers. Perhaps this was. But one who is conscious of the part religion has played in the fossilising of old customs need not be reminded of the necessity of religious reform being undertaken side by side with social regeneration. The educated people in India have outgrown their customs. To whatever reform they direct their energies they are met at every turn by the all-absorbing and tyrannical Hindu religion holding every custom tight with the iron grip of desperation. Naturally they feel an aversion from it, and the odium is gradually transferred from its vulnerable parts to those that are lovely. The same religion that once trespassed upon the provinces of society and law is now, in its turn, exposed to the danger of having its merits confounded with its defects. Its blind mistakes recoil upon its head with a terrible fury; and after having taken undue liberty with its sister institutions it is now fast losing the respect that is its due.

The Bengali as well as the Maratha reformers thought fit to substitute in the place of the old religion a new one

which was in reality nothing more or less than the self-same old religion shorn of its accidents and excrescences, the old religion in all its pure splendour. The religions movement in Bengal was far more successful than that in the Bombay Presidency. The result has been that in Bengal religious reform has kept pace with social reform, while in the Bombay Presidency it has given place to scepticism and atheism. On the other hand, in Bengal social reform has been in a degree impeded by the tacit requirement of conformity with the principles of Brahmoism which is the religion of the reformers, while in Bombay the reformers, apparently continuing as they do in the religion of their ancestors, are not estranged from popular sympathy to the degree they have done in Bengal. In Bengal, social reform has assumed the shape of a caste question, while in Bombay the refusal of the reformers to claim a separate caste for themselves has set the whole society in a ferment. Reform is bound to live an isolated life in Bengal, and to be general in Bombay. Whichever state of the two one is inclined to prefer to the other, one fact remains undisputed that neither social aristocracy nor religious anarchy is a thing to be congratulated upon. It is time the Shankaracharya reviewed his decision in the Poona controversy in a spirit of compromise and effected a reconciliation between the innovations that are knocking for admission and the old religion that is indignantly refusing them entrance.

The number of remarriages is bound to be small as compared to that of first marriages. Bearing this fact in mind, we find that the number of remarriages is steadily growing every year. Occasional inequalities can be accounted for by the recent terrible visitations that have relegated everything save the safety of life to a subordinate rank. A sudden increase is expected after society is restored to its equilibrium, which, it is fervently hoped, is at no distant date.

XII. The Condition of Low Castes

BY K. RAMANUJACHARI, ESQ., M. A., B. L.,

Principal, Maharajah's College, Vizianagram.

The position assigned to low castes in the Hindu social organization is one of its least satisfactory features. When in the early nineties, an agitation was started by some Missionaries in the south, for the purpose of calling the attention of the Madras Government to their miserable condition, I expressed my views in writing and placed them before the late Maharajah of Vijayanagaram, whose generous sympathy with the low, the miserable, and the fallen was known to all that knew him intimately, in the hope that his support if secured, would be a powerful aid to those who were trying to elevate them. Though the Maharajah assured me of his sympathy with them, nothing came out of it.

Who are the people that come under the category of low castes? They go by different names in different parts of the country; they are called Malas and Madigas in the Circars, Pariahs in the Tamil country, Holiyas in Canara, Poliyas in Malabar, and Dhedas in Maharashtra. They are known as Chandalas to the writers of Smritis. According to Manu, a Chandala is one who has a Sudra father and a Brahmin mother. Though this definition of Chandala has been accepted by all the later smriti writers, I think that the real Chandalas were probably those aboriginal tribes whom the Aryans cut off from Society, perhaps on account of their vicious lives. With a view to discourage as far as possible intercourse between Brahmin women and Sudra men, the Brahmin law-givers degraged the offsprings of such unions to the level of those who, having been thrown out of the pale of the Aryan community, were in certain respects regarded as worse than beasts. Their complexion

and features, their mode of worship, their marriage and other ceremonies, all point to a non-Aryan origin. Long before the time of Manu, the Chandalas, whatever their origin, must have been reduced to the condition similar to that in which we still find their descendants; for, we find that his description of their social condition is, in certain respects, not inapplicable to the low castes of the present day, making allowance for the changes which it has undergone in the altered state of the Hindu society under the British rule.

Abbe Dubois says "the Pariahs were most probably composed in the first instance of all the disreputable individuals of different classes of society, who on account of their various offences had forfeited their right to associate with respectable men. They formed a class apart and having nothing to fear and less to lose, they gave themselves up without restraint to their natural tendencies towards vice and excess in which they continue to live at the present day."*

Some are of opinion that the Pariahs were originally hill people and that they were driven away from the plains by their Aryan conquerors. There does not seem to be any ethnological connection between them and the various classes of hill people in Southern India, such as the Khonds, the Savaras, the Gadabas, the Lumbadis. Their marriage, funeral and other rites have little in common; as regards their physical features, there is hardly any resemblance between them and any of the existing hill tribes that I know of in Southern India.

The following is what Manu says about them:—

(a) "Chandalas and Svapachas (those who eat dog's flesh) shall live outside the village; they shall have no utensils for their use; their property shall consist in dogs and asses."

(b) "They shall put on clothing taken off dead bodies, and eat

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* *Vide* page 53, Beauchamp's translation of Abbe Dubois' Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies.

their food in broken pots. Their ornaments shall be made of iron and they shall always wander about."

(*c*) "While engaged in the performance of religious duties, no twice-born man shall have anything to do with them. They shall have dealings amongst themselves and contract marriages with their equals."

(*d*) "They shall not receive food directly (from a man of twice-born class) but shall receive the same in a broken pot through another (a Sudra). They shall not move about in towns and villages at night."

(*e*) "They may go on business during the day, wearing a badge (to be distinguished from other classes) under orders of the King; they shall remove from the village the dead body of one who had no relations left; so says the law."

(*f*) "Under orders of the king and in accordance with the law, they shall hang those who are condemned to death. They shall take the clothing and ornaments of those who are condemned to death."*

From what is stated above, it is plain that the Chandalas were thrown out of the Hindu community and that their cup of misery was full before the time of Manu. I shall quote below a few extracts from Parasara who came long after Manu, which refer to certain expiatory ceremonies to be performed by members of twice-born classes for sins arising from contact (direct or indirect) with Chandalas.

(*a*) "If a Brahmin happens to talk to a Chandala, he shall (in order to be purified from the pollution arising therefrom) talk to other Brahmins and repeat Savitri."

(*b*) "A Brahmin who has slept with a Chandala shall fast for three days. A Brahmin who has walked on a road with a Chandala is purified by the repetition of Gayatri."

(*c*) "A Brahmin touching a Chandala shall forthwith look at the sun, and also perform his ablutions with his clothing on."

(*d*) "A Brahmin drinking water from a well, being unaware that it was sunk by a Chandala, is purified by taking only a single meal daily, for three consecutive days."

(*e*) "If a Brahmin drinks water from a well touched by the pot of a Chandala, he is purified after eating *yavas* (barley) cooked in cow's urine, for three days."

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* Manu Chapter 10, (*a*) 51, (*b*) 52, (*c*) 53, (*d*) 54, (*e*) 55, (*f*) 56.

(*f*) "A Brahmin who drinks water from the pot of a Chandala is purified by performing the Prajapatya ceremony, provided that he has spit it out forthwith."

(*g*) "If such water is digested, the Brahmin shall perform Santapana, but not Prajapatya."

(*h*) "If a Brahmin eats once the food of a Chandala, being unaware that it is such, he is purified by eating *yavas* (barley) cooked in cow's urine, for three consecutive days."

(*i*) "If a Brahmin allows a Chandala to live in his house, without knowing that he is such, he is purified if he performs a number of expiatory ceremonies, besides setting fire to his house."*

A reference to the later Sanscrit writers shows that there was no improvement in the position of Chandalas as a class in Epic or Puranic times, a Chandala being always spoken of as the most degraded of human beings, an embodiment of all that is impure, immoral and wicked, a being with whom the higher castes should have no sort of intercourse whatsoever. Whatever changes Hindu society may have undergone in the course of ages, whatever effect the growth of new ideas may have had upon different sects by way of splitting them into sub-sects, the socio-religious relations of the different castes do not seem to have very much changed and the position of the low castes has consequently remained unaltered. The establishment of the Mahomedan rule in India does not appear to have improved the position of the Chandalas, although the Mussalmans recognise no caste and freely employ them in their domestic service. It is a curious fact that some of the Mahomedan rulers who bore no good will to the Brahmins and persecuted them in various ways, should never have thought of elevating the Chandalas, as a measure calculated to degrade the Brahmins and reduce their influence. So, whether the country was ruled by the Hindu or Mussalman kings, their lot remained the same, throughout many centuries. The picture given by Abbe Dubois of their

* Parasara, Chapter 6, (*a*) 22, (*b*) 23, (*c*) 24, (*d*) 25, (*e*) 26, (*f*) 27, (*g*) 28, (*h*) 32, (*i*) 34 and 40.

condition about the end of the eighteenth century clearly bears out the truth of the above statement.

(*a*) "The contempt and aversion with which the other castes and particularly the Brahmins regard these unfortunate people are carried to such an excess that in many places their presence or even their foot-prints are considered sufficient to defile the whole neighbourhood. They are forbidden to cross a street in which Brahmins are living. Should they be so ill-advised as to do so, the later would have the right not to strike them themselves because they could not do so without defilement or even touch them with the end of a long stick, but to order them to be severely beaten by other people, &c., &c., &c.*

(*b*) "Any one who has been touched whether inadvertently or purposely by a Pariah is defiled by that single act, and may hold no communication with any person whatsoever until he has been purified by bathing or by other ceremonies, more or less important according to the status and customs of his caste. It would be contamination to eat with any member of this class, to touch food prepared by them or even to drink water which they have drawn; to use an earthen vessel which they have held in their hands; to set foot inside one of their houses or to allow them to enter houses other than their own. Each of these acts would contaminate the person affected by it and before being readmitted to his own caste, such a person would have to go through many exacting and expensive formalities."†

(*c*) "Throughout the whole of India, the Pariahs are looked upon as slaves by other castes and are treated with great harshness. Hardly anywhere are they allowed to cultivate for their own benefit, but are obliged to hire themselves out to the other castes who in return for a minimum wage exact the hardest task from them."‡

(*d*) "However, notwithstanding the miserable condition of these wretched Pariahs, they are never heard to murmur or to complain of their lowest state. Still less do they ever dream of trying to improve their lot by combining together and forcing the other classes," &c., &c., &c.

(*e*) "Nothing will ever persuade him (a Pariah) that men are all made of the same clay or that he has a right to insist on better treatment than that which is meted out to him."

* *a*) *Vide* page 52, Chapter 5, part I. Beauchamp's translation of Abbe Dubois' Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies.

† (*b*) Same as (*a*).

‡ (*c*) *Vide* page 50, part and Chapter same as (*a*) and (*b*).

(*f*) "They live in hopeless poverty and the greater number lack sufficient means to procure even the coarsest clothing. They go about almost naked or at best clothed in the most hideous rags."

(*g*) "They live from hand to mouth the whole year round, and rarely know one day how they will procure food for the next; when they happen to have any money, they invariably spend it at once on the drink, and make a point of doing no work, as long as they have anything left to live on."*

(*h*) "Among the forests on the Malabar Coast there lives a tribe which, incredible as it may seem, surpasses the two (Pariahs and Palvers, the latter a class of Pariahs found in Madura) of which I have just spoken, in degradation and squalid misery. They are called Puliahs and are looked upon as below the level of beasts which share this wild country with them. They are not even allowed to build themselves huts to protect themselves from the inclemencies of the weather. A sort of lean-to supported by four bamboo-poles and open at the sides serves as a shelter for some of them and keeps off the rain, though it does not screen them from the wind. Most of them however make for themselves what may be called nests in the branches of the thickest-foliaged trees where they perch like birds of prey for the greater part of the twenty-four hours. They are not even allowed to walk peaceably along the high road. If they see any one coming towards them, they are bound to utter a certain cry and to go a long way round to avoid passing him. A hundred paces is the very nearest they may approach any one of a different caste," &c., &c., &c.

(*i*) "The Puliahs live an absolutely savage life and have no communication whatever with the rest of the world."†

From the description given by Dubois of the condition of the low castes of his time, the reader will see that through all the vicissitudes through which India passed, there was no change in their position in relation to the other castes, and that if there had been any, it was for the worse; but the consolidation of the British power in India has had a beneficial effect upon it; the abolition of slavery in India has secured perfect personal freedom for the low castes, of which in certain parts of the country such

* (*d*), (*e*), (*f*), (*g*). *Vide* page 51, Chapter and Pt. same as (*a*), (*b*), (*c*).
†(*h*) and (*i*). *Vide* pages 61, 92, Chapter and Pt. same as (*a*), (*b*), &c.

as Malabar, they had not dreamt for many centuries. The law recognises no distinction of caste, and those who injure the person or property of their fellow beings under the alleged sanction of custom are punished. A qualified man of low caste is equally eligible for appointment under the Government with a qualified man of high caste. Theoretically, these are no small gains to a fallen class, whose very existence except for duties was not recognised till the establishment of the British power; I say theoretically for, as circumstances stand, the only real boon for which they are as a class indebted to the British Government is that of personal freedom. As I am going to speak of their education later on, I need not here discuss the question whether and how far the Government deserve to be praised for the facilities they have afforded to low castes in that direction.

In the following paragraphs I propose to describe the present condition of the low castes so that the reader may form an idea of the disabilities to which they are still subject under the best of rulers which this country has ever had. Though I have had no opportunities of observing personally the condition of the Pariahs outside the Circars, from what I have read and heard about them, I believe that my remarks may be applied to the class as a whole, in whatever part of the country they may be found.

The low castes live as a rule outside towns and villages and always at some distance from them. They live in huts. The roof of a Pariah hut is made of palmyra leaves or thatch, whichever is available in the locality, and supported on low mud walls of not more than four or five feet in height; it has one entrance which is often so low that only children of not more than ten or twelve years of age can conveniently enter. It is not provided with windows or other contrivances to let in light or air. Inside the hut, all that one finds is only a pile of earthen pots and sometimes a rickety make-shift of a cot and a dirty stinking mat

made of palm or date leaves. Generally, the hut has no backyard attached to it, and when it has one, it is full of filth and looks like a rubbish depot. Tiled houses are exceedingly rare. As the surface of the ground on which the parchery stands is not generally much above the surrounding fields, their huts are damp, except during the hot weather; consequently those that live in them often suffer from fever and dysentery. Their surroundings are generally in a most insanitary condition, as portions of carcases of cattle and other animals upon which they feed are thrown near their huts and allowed to rot and stink. If the problem of village sanitation has defied the attempts of the Government up to date, the solution of that of parchery sanitation must be regarded as an impossibility for the present.

The dress of Panchamas, especially of those living in villages, is of the most scanty description, consisting of a rag tied round the waist in the case of males. It is doubtful whether in villages, they change their rags more than twice or thrice a year. Their women are somewhat better clad, although their clothing is made of the coarsest stuff. Those that are decently dressed are found only in towns being employed as syces, &c.

If we except a few who are in the service of the Government or Europeans, as well as those who are substantial farmers or traders, whose number must be exceedingly small, they may be said to live on the coarsest kind of food acceptable to any class of the people living in the plains. They are generally so poor that it is doubtful if the majority of them have more than a single scanty meal a day for many months in the year, in addition to gruel which they cannot do without in the morning. What is left of food partaken by the higher classes on such occasions as marriage, &c., is about the most delicious an ordinary Panchama can hope to get. They are fond of liquor and drink

toddy generally and arrack if they get a chance. They are so fond of drink that they often spend the whole of their miserably small daily wages for it.

A large number of Panchamas earn their livelihood as servants of farmers and are mostly paid in kind for their services. Many of them are also day labourers, their wages ranging in this part of the country from nine pies to two annas a day. They are employed as syces. A few are petty farmers. Some are employed as village watchmen; in addition to the duties of village watchmen they carry messages in the day time, the proprietor or the headman of the village having a right to employ them for private or public purpose as the case may be. Panchamas are also found in the Police or the Military department and some are in the domestic service of Europeans and Mussalmans. Shoe-making and leather dressing are chiefly in their hands. In towns, a particular class of them are employed as sweepers and scavengers. We do not find many beggars among them, at least not so many as one may reasonably expect to see amongst such poor people; this is perhaps due to the fact that a Panchama cannot maintain himself by begging, as he is regarded as unworthy of being helped by the other classes of the community.

To speak of the property of Panchamas, if we except those who are in the employ of the Government or of Europeans and a few others who are either farmers or traders, it is doubtful if they can be said to have any property at all, except the miserable huts in which they live. In most cases even these huts are not their own; and they are allowed to live in them only so long as it suits the convenience of their masters. That the bulk of the people in India are very poor, is a fact which every man who knows anything really about their material condition must admit. If the majority of the lower classes who are higher in social scale are hopelessly poor, what must be the lot of the Panchamas

who, occupying the lowest position in society, depend upon them for their livelihood? I would that somebody took the trouble to collect statistics regarding the material condition of these low castes, and place the information before the public so that they may see how miserably poor they are.

As for the treatment of the Panchamas by the higher castes, in certain respects the history of the world can show no parallel to it. It is true that a low caste man is legally free; but socially, is he not worse than a slave ever was in the worst days of slavery? The slaves in ancient Greece and Rome had no personal freedom and were bought and sold freely. They were given the hardest and meanest kinds of work to do, and if they complained, they were flogged or punished in any other manner their lords thought it fit to punish them; they were not allowed to own any property or to enjoy the fruits of their labour; they were severely punished for disobedience and might under certain circumstances even be put to death by their owners; and if the owners did so, they were accountable to nobody for it. In fact, they were absolutely at the mercy of their masters. If the master happened to be a cruel man, there was no end to the misery of his slaves. With all these disabilities, the slaves were in a certain sense the companions of their lords; they were in personal attendance on them; and if they were intelligent and faithful, they became their confidential advisers. Sometimes they got their freedom when they did signal services to their masters, and were then as good as any freeborn men. The idea of cutting off a whole class from society and keeping them at a distance as a mark of their degradation, declaring them to be unfit for any kind of intercourse, never seems to have struck the Greeks or the Romans.* However unsympathetic may

* Dr. Schmitz speaking of the Helots of Sparta says, "the members of the ruling class were held to be profaned by the touch of the unfortunate outcaste; the latter are said to have sometimes been forced to make themselves drunk that in this state they might be exposed to the derision and insults of their young lords as a practical lesson of sobriety." But he thinks that this and similar stories may be exaggerated.

have been the attitude of the general community towards the slaves in middle ages, we find that the priestly class stood by them and that the church was the protector of the oppressed slave. In England, the abolition of serfdom and villainage was greatly due to the exertions of the clergy who used their influence with the powerful and the wealthy to get their slaves manumitted.*

In this respect the attitude of the priestly caste in India towards low castes has always been the reverse of that of the Christian clergy towards the slaves in Europe.* The untold misery of millions of the Panchamas in this country throughout numberless generations has been the result of the aversion of the priestly class towards them. How is a Panchama treated by the higher classes? Is he not regarded as the worst of human beings, nay, worse than the most unclean of animals? Is he not treated worse than a dog, an ass or even a pig? If a Brahmin has scruples to touch a pig, he has none to approach him. Can a Panchama ever dare to come near a Brahmin without being reviled for his insolence? A Panchama is regarded

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* "Slavery was gradually disappearing before the efforts of the Church. Theodore had denied Christian burial to the kidnapper, and prohibited the sale of children by their parents, after the age of seven. Ecgberht of York punished any sale of child or kinsfolk with excommunication. The murder of a slave by lord or mistress, though no crime in the eye of the State became a sin for which penance was due to the Church. The slave was exempted from toil on Sundays and holy days; here and there he became attached to the soil and could only be sold with it; sometimes he acquired a plot of ground, and was suffered to purchase his own release. Æthelstan gave the slave-class a new rank in the realm by extending to it the same principles of mutual responsbility for crime which were the basis of order among the free. The Church was far from contenting herself with this gradual elevation; Wilfrid led the way in the work of emancipation by freeing two hundred and fifty serfs whom he found attached to his estate at Selsey. Manumission became frequent in wills, as the clergy taught that such a gift was a boon to the soul of the dead. At the Synod of Chelsea the bishops bound themselves to free at their decease all serfs on their estates who had been reduced to serfdom by want or crime. Usually the slave was set free before the altar or in the Church-porch, and the Gospel-book bore written on its margins the record of his emancipation." *Vide* pages 58 and 59, Chap. I, A Short History of the English People, Green.

such an impure creature that a Brahmin believes that he is polluted by his near approach and does not become pure unless he performs certain expiatory ceremonies. The aversion to the Panchama is so strong up to date that in villages remotely situated from towns and mostly inhabited by Brahmins, he dare not show himself in the Brahmin quarter; and if he crosses the threshold of a Brahmin's house, he is sure to be addressed in a language which no member of another caste would ever tolerate. What if the law recognises no distinction between the high and low castes? Hindu society says that the low castes are beyond its pale. Tyranny political or social is a curse; but of the two the social is a greater curse than the political. The following remarks of John Stuart Mill, though made in connection with a different subject may be applied to the case of the low castes in India :—

"Like other tyrannies, the tyranny of the majority was at first, and is still vulgarly, held in dread, chiefly as operating through the acts of the public authorities. But reflecting persons perceive that when society is itself the tyrant—society collectively, over the separate individuals who compose it—its means of tyrannising are not restricted to the acts which it may do by the hands of its political functionaries. Society can and does execute its own mandates, and if it issues wrong mandates instead of right, or any mandates at all in things with which it ought not to meddle, it practises social tyranny more formidable than many kinds of political oppression, since, though not usually upheld by such extreme penalties, it leaves fewer means of escape, penetrating much more deeply into the details of life and enslaving the soul itself."* When a great community has so far allowed its higher instincts to be warped that it comes to treat a large portion of itself, numbering some millions, as worse than beasts, and totally

* *Vide* page 3, Chap. I., Liberty, by John Stuart Mill (People's Edition).

refuses to recognise those ties which bind humanity together, sad must be the lot of that unfortunate portion which for no fault of its own is degraded to a position the worst imaginable for any community to occupy. The existence of the present order of things for centuries has worked such a change in the minds of the higher and lower castes alike that both of them have come to regard their present relations as perfectly natural. The Panchama who lives a miserable and degraded life, who is allowed no sort of social intercourse with the other sections of the community, who is not even allowed to go near the higher classes, being denied a concession made to the dirtiest of animals, takes this treatment as perfectly natural and is hardly aware of his own degradation. Does he ever think that his position is capable of improvement, and that as a human being he has certain indefeasible rights which no custom to the contrary can take away? Every man who is born into this world has a natural right to walk over high ways and in public places in his own country. Every man who is born into this world has a right to take water from such sources as are available for the general use of the community. Yet some of these primary rights of man are denied to the Panchama; he is not allowed to walk in certain streets of villages owned by Brahmins even though they are public property; if he happens to see a Brahmin coming in the opposite direction, after the latter has performed his ablutions in the village tank, he would have to go off the way lest the Brahmin should be polluted. He is not allowed to take water from wells used by the other classes in consequence whereof he is put to serious inconveniences in places where the people depend upon a few wells for their drinking water, especially during the hot weather. Is not this tantamount to a denial of primary human rights to the Panchama? Commission of crimes may entail loss of primary as well as secondary rights; but in such a

case it is only the individual criminal, the actual perpetrator of the crimes that is punished. We have no idea of the crimes committed by the forefathers of the existing low castes for which they lost their status as human beings; but it is certainly unjust to enforce in the case of the descendants the penalties originally inflicted on their forefathers, except by applying to them the calvinistic doctrine of original sin which the humanity of the nineteenth century rejects as one of the exploded beliefs of medæval Christianity. If the Panchamas do not deserve this treatment on the ground of being the descendants of their forefathers, do they deserve it on account of their personal actions or character? Are the Panchamas as a class worse than any other of the lower classes of the Hindu community, allowance being made for the circumstances under which they have been placed for centuries? If a general enquiry were made regarding their character, I have no doubt it would result in bringing to light some facts which would show them in a favourable light when compared to some classes who are above them in the social scale. There is evidence to show that in early times there were Panchamas distinguished for their genius, learning and piety, and their names are venerated by the Hindus up to the present day. If tradition may be believed, Valmiki, the author of the Ramayana, which is considered to be the first and certainly one of the finest epic poems in Sanskrit, is said to have been a Panchama. This tradition is supported by the Padmapurana and Jnana Vasishtha, both of which are regarded as works of authority by learned Brahmins. The immortal author of Kural, known as Tiruvalluvar, and Tiruppaniyalwar, one of the twelve saints worshipped by the Vaishnava community, are both supposed to have been men of Panchama origin. Marner Numbiyar, a disciple of Yamunacharyar, one of the greatest Vaishnava scholar-saints of antiquity, though a Panchama by birth, received

all the high funeral honors of a Brahman saint on his death. I have heard of some Panchamas of modern times who were held in respect by their contemporaries for their learning and piety. If the Panchama community, which produced such men, does not deserve to be treated with contempt and aversion, and if under favourable circumstances members thereof have every chance of rising and distinguishing themselves, the problem of elevating low castes is surely worthy of the serious attention of the social reformer. There are about five million Panchamas in Southern India, excluding those in the Native States of Mysore, Travancore and Cochin. There is a large Panchama population in the Western Presidency, and their number is not inconsiderable in Bengal and Northern India. Probably the total Panchama population in India is about seven millions. Surely the question of the emancipation of so many millions of human beings cannot be unimportant. To the best of my knowledge, so far as the Indian social reformer is concerned, the Panchama problem has not yet advanced beyond the stage of discussion. A reference to the reports of the Indian Social Conference for the last few years shows that although the reformers have not lost sight of the question, they have not been able to formulate any definite proposal regarding its solution. The question of social reform in India is a peculiarly difficult one. We all know how attempts made by some of our best men to introduce small but salutary changes into customs are met with an apposition calculated to break the spirit of any but the most resolute, changes too about the desirability of which there is little difference of opinion, not only among the few who by their education and experience are competent to form an opinion, but also among the many whose minds have not been petrified under the dead weight of custom. If the reformers are unable to change recent practices which are admitted to be pernicious, for which there is no